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HUMAN HEARTS.

BY SADIE BEATTY.

The heights and depths of human hearts are hidden,
A calm exterior may not speak of peace,
Grief is a guest that comes to all unbidden,
And mirth may cover pangs that will not cease.

Aye, shrink aghast before the world's wide staring,
They judge alone by what the eye can see,
And if the outer man a smile is wearing,
What is 't to them how deep the heartbreak be?

Upon the ocean's placid waters sailing,
Who thinks the mouldering bones beneath to dread?
And though in churchyards we may stand bewailing,
We see the gleaming marble, not the dead.

So we approve, condemn by present seeming,
And think the surface is the depth and height,
While far below the hidden life is teeming
With thoughts and feelings never brought to light.

Ah, secret wounds whose coming knows no going;
Pride's folded hands conceal the festering darts;
The world goes on and on, God only knowing
The bitter heights and depths of human hearts.

THE

Bandits of the Prairie.

A TALE OF THE TEXAN FRONTIER

BY T. J. CHAMBERS.

LOUISA WATCHING THE APPROACH OF THE SOLITARY HORSEMAN.

CHAPTER I.

THE FIRST MEETING.

It was a beautiful morning in October. Scene, a cattle ranche, or farm, in the western part of Texas.

The rude but comfortable house in which Mr. Stanhope, the owner of the ranche, resided, was built by the edge of a belt of timber. A large and well-cultivated garden was enclosed in front of the house, in which grew numerous varieties of vegetables; and several carefully-tended beds of brilliant flowers showed that the inmates of the rough dwelling appreciated the beautiful as well as the useful.

The front door of the house stood open; and a young girl descended the steps and stood for a moment motionless on the grass-carpeted ground. She was evidently not afraid of the warm rays of the morning sun, for she held her bonnet in her hand, letting her dark curls wander at will over her shoulders. She was a wondrously beautiful maiden, apparently about seventeen years of age—in the first bloom of lovely womanhood. Her figure was of the medium height, neither full nor slender, but exquisitely rounded and graceful. Her face was of the brunette type; large, lustrous, flashing black eyes, which she inherited from her Spanish mother; a broad, white brow, over which waved tresses of glossy, jet-black hair; smooth, oval cheeks, where the warm blood seemed ready to burst through the velvet skin; a small, haughty, scarlet mouth, with a row of pearly teeth showing between the parted lips: a round, loving, dimpled chin, and a neck as fair and smooth as alabaster. Such was Louisa Stanhope, Mr. Stanhope's youngest daughter.

"Where are you going, Louisa?" called a soft, musical voice from the house.

A little frown dwelt on the girl's beautiful face for a moment.

"Only for a little stroll on the prairie, mother," she replied. "You need not be uneasy about me; there is nothing to be afraid of, and I will not go far."

"I wish you could be satisfied to stay in the house or the garden, my daughter," continued Mrs. Stanhope. "I consider it very imprudent for you to be roaming alone over the prairies."

"Why, what do you fear, mother?" asked Louisa, impatiently.

"I scarcely know. We have never been molested by the Indians so far, but still it is possible that some should be prowling around, and it is best to be cautious."

"Why, there is not an Indian within fifty miles of us. Good-bye, mother, I must take a run in the free air—but don't you worry about me."

So saying, the beautiful, wilful girl donned her bonnet, and ran lightly out of the yard and upon the open, undulating prairie. She was a child of Nature, with a passionate love for everything wild and sublime; and her heart bounded with delight as she gazed over the boundless plain, dotted with occasional groves of timber, or with herds of grazing cattle.

"Ah, liberty, how sweet thou art!" she exclaimed. "Never will I part from thee—never will I permit my soul to be bound in fetters of any kind."

Ah, she little thought what fetters were soon to be forged around her untamed, passionate spirit.

With glowing cheeks and sparkling eyes, the young girl bounded across the prairie with the grace and almost with the speed of an antelope—sometimes pausing to examine a rare cluster of flowers that grew amid the grass at her feet. As the sun climbed higher in the sky, the heat grew intense, and Miss Stanhope sought the grateful shade of a grove of trees, where she seated herself upon a fallen branch to rest.

As Louisa gazed over the vast plain, she beheld in the distance a solitary horseman, riding in her direction. There was nothing remarkable in this—but the girl gazed at the lonely equestrian with deep interest.

"Who can it be?" she mused. "Perhaps it is Juan, my father's herdsman—but no—Juan never rides like that. I will soon know, for he is coming toward me."

The stranger's black steed was bounding over the plain with the speed of a deer.

"My lover shall ride like that—if I ever have a lover," said the girl, with a musical laugh. "He sits upon his horse as proudly as if he were lord of all these prairies, and—but there, he has disappeared, and I will think no more about him until he approaches closer."

The stranger had descended into a ravine, where ran a small stream, and was for the moment lost to sight.

Louisa Stanhope turned, and stooped to pluck a flower which grew at her feet. As she did so, she heard a slight rattling noise, like the flutter of a grasshopper's wings, and caught the glance of two strange, fiery, diamond-like eyes, fixed upon her face.

It was the deadly rattlesnake, which abounds in most parts of Texas.

Shivering with terror, yet unable to flee—held to her seat by the mysterious mesmerism of the reptile's eyes—the girl could only stare in horror at her dreadful enemy. She strove to break the subtle spell—to scream, to spring to her feet—but her tongue refused to perform its office, her limbs had lost their power; and slowly, yet surely, her will became fascinated, until she no longer felt a desire to escape—she only wished to look into those small, glittering, devilish eyes. It was only a step between her and the serpent's mouth, and the reptile prepared to strike its deadly fangs into the maiden's flesh. Its head was raised, and its red, forked tongue darted out and in with the rapidity of lightning. How long it would have dallied with its victim ere it struck the fatal blow, cannot be known; but a new actor appeared upon the scene, in the form of the solitary horseman. Comprehending the situation at a glance, the stranger quickly dismounted from his steed, grasped a revolver in his hand, and approaching close to the rattlesnake, he fired a shot which blew the reptile's head to atoms. This broke the spell that bound the girl's senses; but the shock to her sensitive nerves was too great. She uttered a slight scream, and then fell down upon the grass unconscious.

And then the stranger did what was doubtless very wrong, but what was also very natural, considering that he was a young man; he raised the maiden's form in his arms, bent his face close to hers, and pressed kiss after kiss upon her beautiful, pallid lips. This novel procedure had the desired effect; Miss Stanhope soon recovered her senses, and opened her eyes to find a wonderfully handsome masculine face touching her own. Her cheeks, which a moment before were colorless, became red as ripening cherries, and she struggled to free herself from the stranger's arms.

"Who are you, sir? And how dare you hold me thus?" she cried, indignantly.

The young man released her, with an amused smile.

"I will tell my father of your insolence, and he will have you punished, whoever you are," continued Louisa, almost ready to cry with anger and shame.

"You are scarcely just, young lady," said the stranger. "I find you powerless under the charm of a rattlesnake. I slay the reptile, and thus deliver you from a horrible death. You faint away, and to restore you to consciousness I take you in my arms and kiss you—a proceeding which does you no harm, and which affords me exquisite pleasure. Now, to pay me for all my trouble, you threaten to deliver me over to the tender mercies of an enraged parent. Have pity on me, fair maiden, I beseech you."

Louisa looked around, and saw the writhing body of the headless rattlesnake. Remembering the peril from which she had been delivered, she turned her great dark eyes, swimming in tears, to the stranger's laughing face.

"Oh, sir, forgive me," she said. "You have saved my life, and I thank you more than I can tell."

"Then you won't have me punished by your savage paternal relative?" asked the young man.

"Oh, sir, forget my ungrateful words; I did not know the services you had rendered me," replied the girl, bursting into tears. "Say you forgive me, or I will never forgive myself."

"There, there, little girl, don't cry—I will forgive you on one condition."

"What is it?" asked Louisa, drying her tears.

"You must forgive me for being so impudent as to hold you in my arms and kiss you—not exactly against your will, but without your knowledge," laughed the stranger.

"I forgive you, sir. I—I suppose the kisses—did no particular harm," replied Louisa, blushing like a peony.

"I hope not, I am sure. And since you are so gracious as to forgive me, I will promise not to repeat the offence—if I can help it," smiled the young gentleman, gazing with undisguised admiration at the lovely maiden, and receiving a shy glance in return.

While they are regarding each other, we will try to describe the young man's personal appearance.

Judging from appearances, his age was four or five-and-twenty. His form was tall, broad-shouldered and strongly built, but still light and graceful in movement. His face was fair, with a frank, open expression of countenance. His brown hair curled closely around his shapely head, and a tawny mustache shaded his mouth. His eyes were gray, large, bright and piercing. His forehead was high and broad, and white as a woman's. Altogether, he was an eminently handsome man, and so thought Louisa Stanhope, as she surveyed him out of the corners of her big black eyes.

"Since we have met in such a romantic manner, my dear young lady, we should know each other's names," said the stranger. "I will, therefore, introduce myself. My name is Walter Darrell. My home is in New Orleans, but I intend to spend the autumn here in Texas, at the house of an old friend."

"And I am Louisa Stanhope, youngest daughter of James Stanhope, the owner of this cattle ranche," said the young girl, trying to speak with dignity.

"The deuce!" exclaimed Mr. Darrell; adding, a moment later, "I beg your pardon, Miss Stanhope, but I am a good deal surprised. Mr. Stanhope is the name of the friend I am going to visit, so you and I are likely to become very well acquainted. My friend cannot be your father, however—he is still a young man."

"You must mean my brother George, I suppose. I have heard him speak of forming the acquaintance of a young merchant in New Orleans—and I think he called his name Darrell."

"Your brother and I became firm friends, Miss Stanhope," said Darrell. "I had the good luck to save him from the toils of a set of gamblers, into whose hands he had unwarily fallen, and he was very grateful for my trifling services. We were constant companions while he remained in the city; and when he departed, he urged me strongly to pay a visit to his home in Texas. As I have always had a great fondness for hunting and fishing, I promised to accept my friend's invitation at the earliest opportunity; and, consequently, here I am."

"And I assure you that you will be welcome," said Louisa, warmly. "Our house is far from elegant, and you will find little of the refinement you have been accustomed to in the city; but, at least, you shall not say that we lack hospitality."

"Or that my friend's sister lacks beauty," replied Darrell, gallantly. "Miss Louisa, if the rest of your family are as charming as yourself, I shall be delighted with my visit."

Miss Stanhope blushed deeply, but did not seem displeased by the young man's freedom of manner.

"Flattery is one of your accomplishments, I see," she said, laughing, "and doubtless your lady friends find it a very agreeable one; but it will be entirely thrown away on ignorant country-girls like myself."

"I never flatter," said Mr. Darrell, gravely, "and were I disposed to do so, I should not be able to flatter *you*."

"Worse and worse," laughed Louisa. "But come, Mr. Darrell, as you are going to my father's house I will be your guide, and conduct you thither."

"Ebony can easily carry us both, so you shall mount behind me," said Darrell, affectionately patting his steed's arched, glossy neck.

"The distance is short, and I prefer to walk," replied Louisa, looking suspiciously at her companion's restless, coal-black charger.

"Then I will walk also, and Ebony will follow as quietly as a lamb," said Mr. Darrell.

Accordingly the two walked side by side across the prairie, while the intelligent animal followed a few steps behind his master. Mr. Darrell was a fine talker, and on this occasion he exerted himself to please, with a fair measure of success. Miss Stanhope was charmed. She had never met a man so handsome and agreeable as this young stranger. She listened eagerly to his eloquent words, and when she ventured to raise her eyes to his face, they fell quickly before his admiring glance, and the blushes deepened on her cheeks. Young, enthusiastic and susceptible, she was fast losing her warm, passionate heart. In the morning she had bounded forth across the prairie as careless and heart-free as a child; a few hours later she returned with a strange, delicious sensation glowing in her bosom, and scarlet blushes dyeing her maiden cheeks. Never more could she know that freedom and light-heartedness which she had prized so highly.

CHAPTER II.

JUAN, THE HERDSMAN—A PLEASURE EXCURSION.

Mr. Darrell was cordially received by Mr. Stanhope and his family, and was soon made to feel himself at home. Mr. Stanhope was a hale, jovial, handsome man of fifty; his wife was an exceedingly beautiful lady, several years younger than her husband, and refined and delicate-looking. She possessed the prominent characteristics of the Spanish race—slender form, graceful carriage, and dark, passionate, handsome face, combined with the vivacity and freedom of manner of the American. Louisa resembled her mother very closely, except that her complexion was fairer; but Annie, the elder daughter, resembled her father. Her form was above the medium in size, her eyes blue, her hair a light-brown; and while she was less beautiful than her sister, she was also more dignified in her bearing, and more intellectual in her pursuits. George, the only son, was a tall, handsome, dark-eyed fellow of three-and-twenty, rash and daring in disposition, and also frank, honorable and high-minded. His rashness and love of adventure often led him into trouble, from which he generally managed to extricate himself by his dauntless courage.

There was another young man present, who was introduced to Mr. Darrell as Eugene Layton, the owner of a neighboring ranche. Darrell saw at once that he was Annie Stanhope's lover, and he felt that they would make a splendid match. As his first name indicated, Layton was of French descent, he was slender and wiry in form, with a rather thin and pale, but still very handsome face. He was highly intelligent, and Darrell found him to be an entertaining companion.

After the early dinner had been served, the family and guests adjourned to the long, vine-shaded porch, where the air was cool and refreshing. At her father's request, Miss Louisa brought forth her guitar, and George Stanhope produced a violin, on which he could not play, but on which Mr. Layton was a skilful performer; and the two musicians after tuning their instruments, proceeded to entertain the company with some choice music. Darrell was passionately fond of melody, and he bestowed upon the performers greater praise than they really deserved. While our friends were thus engaged, a man's figure came hastily from the stables, which were situated but a short distance from the house, and the stranger beckoned to Mr. Stanhope.

"Ha, Juan, what is it? what do you want?" asked Mr. Stanhope. "Come on and tell me here whatever you have to say."

Juan, the herdsman, came forward, and leaned against the railings of the porch, while his black, glittering eyes glanced from one to another of the group. He was a Mexican, quite young, and very handsome, although his face was swarthy as an Indian's; but there was a strange fire in his restless eyes, and a sinister expression about his mouth, which did not impress the beholder favorably. Mr. Stanhope entertained a very high opinion of him, however, as he was his chief herdsman, and he reposed in him unlimited confidence. Like the great man of Uz, Mr. Stanhope was rich in flocks and herds. His ranche covered thousands of acres of fertile pastures, on which great numbers of cattle were grazed the whole year through, under the care of experienced herdsmen, mostly Mexicans, and of these Juan was the chief, as we have said. Indeed, Mr. Stanhope paid but little attention to his herds, entrusting them entirely to Juan's supervision. A skilful physiognomist would have doubted the Mexican's honesty; but Mr. Stanhope was not an adept in reading people's characters by their faces, so he had never entertained any suspicions of unfair dealing on the part of his overseer.

"Is anything wrong, man?—speak out," continued Mr. Stanhope, as Juan did not answer his first query.

"Yes," answered the Mexican, in good English. "Yesterday, a band of Indians—Camanches, I think—made a raid on a distant part of the ranche, and captured over a hundred head of cattle."

"The deuce!" exclaimed Mr. Stanhope. "I did not know that there were any Indians near: we have not been troubled by them any lately."

"This was a roving band of a dozen or so, prowling around to find something to steal. Gonzales and two or three others pursued the rascals for a few miles, but they saw no hope of recovering the cattle, and so returned."

"I wish we could devise some means of punishing these red scoundrels," said Mr. Stanhope, angrily. "At this rate they will soon steal all the cattle I have."

"I hope you do not blame me for this, Mr. Stanhope?" said the Mexican. "I could not help it; but now that I suspect danger, I will have the herds more strongly guarded."

"Blame you? Of course not, Juan. I know you to be a trusty fellow, and that you will guard my interests as closely as if they were your own."

"I will, indeed, for your interests are mine," replied Juan, bowing humbly to his employer; but his black, passionate eyes were fastened upon Louisa's face.

"Well, you may go now, Juan. I think it would be a good plan to engage two or three more men, to guard the most exposed herds, if you know where they can be found."

"I can find them, sir—good, fearless fellows."

"Very well, you may engage them at once. Good-day, Juan."

"Good-day, sir."

With another bow, executed with the grace of a polished gentleman, Juan turned and walked away toward the stables, carrying his lithe form proudly erect.

"That man is worth his weight in gold," said Mr. Stanhope.

"Papa, I don't like him," said Louisa, impulsively.

"And why not, little girl? What reason have you to dislike him?" smiled her father.

"I don't know—no good reason, perhaps—but I dislike him, for all that. He looks at me so earnestly, sometimes, and seeks to address me—sometimes I almost think that he loves me."

"Nonsense!" said Mr. Stanhope, flushing with displeasure. "Juan has too much good sense to aspire to the hand of my daughter. He knows that you could never look favorably upon him."

"Well—I don't like him any way, papa," replied Louisa, decisively.

"And, if you will permit me to express an opinion, I don't like him either," said Walter Darrell. "I consider myself a pretty good judge of physiognomy, and if ever a man's face proclaimed him an accomplished villain, that fellow's does. I hope you will pardon me for speaking so plainly, Mr. Stanhope, but I do it for your own good—I wish to put you on your guard against your unprincipled herdsman."

"Why, Mr. Darrell, you are utterly mistaken," said Mr. Stanhope, in a surprised tone. "This man has been in my service for two years, and I have never had any reason to complain of him."

"That may be, but still I hold to my first opinion," persisted Darrell. "This Juan is a cautious rogue, and hides his true character under an agreeable and gentlemanly exterior."

"Well, well, perhaps you are right—but you must excuse me for not agreeing with you," replied Mr. Stanhope. "What is your opinion of my herdsman, Layton? Have you seen anything amiss in him?"

"I cannot say that I have," replied the young man; "but I must confess that I have sometimes entertained suspicions of his honesty."

"And so have I. I do not like the fellow's face," said Annie Stanhope.

"You are all against him, I see," laughed the old gentleman, "and you are all wrong. But I will keep an eye on his actions after this, and if I find that he is playing false with me I will discharge him."

"No doubt the fellow already has his pockets well filled," said Darrell. "Have the Indians ever stolen cattle from you before?"

"Why, yes, sometimes—but what has that to do with Juan's filling his pockets? Surely you don't think that my herdsman is in league with the Indians?"

"I should not express such an opinion without some proofs; but I really think that the Mexican knows more about the disappearance of your cattle than he cares to tell."

"You astound me," said Mr. Stanhope. "It cannot be possible that I have been the dupe of such a rascal."

"Do not believe my hastily-formed opinions," continued Darrell. "I may be mistaken in the man's character, but at any rate it is best for you to be on your guard."

The conversation gradually drifted into other channels, and the afternoon passed rapidly and pleasantly away. Walter Darrell was more than pleased with his new friends—he was delighted, and congratulated himself frequently on his good luck in forming the acquaintance of such a charming family. I strongly suspect that Miss Louisa's black eyes and rosy cheeks influenced the young man a good deal; at least, when he went to bed that night he dreamed of seeing hosts of angels; and, strange to say, the seraphs of his dreams were all gifted with black eyes and jetty ringlets—whereas angels are generally supposed to be azure-eyed and golden-haired.

The next morning being fine, the sky cloudless and the air cool enough to be invigorating, the young people concluded to ride over to Mr. Layton's ranche, that gentleman having tendered them an urgent invitation on taking his departure the previous evening. Accordingly the horses were got in readiness, and the party were soon galloping over the far-stretching prairie. Young Layton's ranche and dwelling were several miles distant from Mr. Stanhope's, and the sunshine was becoming uncomfortably warm by the time our friends reached the former. They were hospitably entertained, and remained until late in the afternoon, when the heat of the sun began to abate. Eugene Layton gladly agreed to accompany his visitors home, and rode beside Miss Stanhope. Walter Darrell monopolized Miss Louisa's atten-

tion, while George Stanhope was left to his own devices.

Hoping to come across a deer, or a herd of buffalo, on which to try his skill as a marksman, young Stanhope left his sisters and their cavaliers to enjoy each other's society, while he galloped over the prairie in search of adventure, as brave if not as foolish as the Knight of La Mancha, and was soon lost to the view of his friends.

Over an hour passed, and Stanhope did not reappear. Louise, who with Darrell rode a short distance behind the other couple, looked anxiously over the prairie.

"I wish George would come back," she said. "It is getting late, and something might happen to him."

"Your brother is the best fellow in the world, but his cautiousness is certainly not largely developed," replied Darrell. "However, there can be no great dangers to encounter on the prairie, and he is familiar with frontier life. See, yonder he comes now, riding at a furious rate, and gesticulating like a madman. What can he mean? Surely he would not go through such violent performances for sport?"

"No, no—something is the matter," said Louisa.

Young Stanhope was indeed riding at a furious rate. His steed came thundering over the prairie, goaded by lash and spur, and its rider was shouting at the top of his voice.

"Flee, for God's sake; run for your lives," he cried, as he drew near.

"What is wrong? What do you mean?" called Darrell, astonished by such a command.

"Indians—Camanches; fly, or we shall all be captured," yelled Stanhope.

"You must be mistaken," said Darrell, gazing over the prairie.

"Do you think so? Look yonder then; do you see them? Fly, for Heaven's sake; there are nearly twenty of them—and our only chance for life is in flight; perhaps we can reach home before they overtake us."

"God help us, you are right," replied Darrell, as he perceived the savages coming over the brow of the knoll, a half-mile distant. "Are you a good rider?" he asked, turning to Louisa.

"Yes—never fear but I shall keep my seat," said the girl, fearlessly.

"Then let us ride like the wind," said Darrell, plunging his spurs into his horse's flanks.

"On, on; Layton, lead the way, and I will bring up the rear," cried Stanhope.

The horses on which our friends were mounted were young and spirited animals; they responded generously to voice and spur, and bounded over the plain with almost fearful rapidity. But the two girls were accomplished equestrians, accustomed to the saddle from childhood; and as the prairie was smooth and level as a floor, they experienced no difficulty in maintaining their seat, although riding at a break-neck rate. The Indians came on in hot pursuit, howling in a horrible manner.

"Faster! faster!" yelled George Stanhope. "By Heaven, the rascals are gaining on us—we shall be overtaken!"

The savages were indeed gaining upon our friends. Their horses bounded over the plain as lightly as antelopes.

"God have mercy upon us, if we fall into their hands," said Darrell, casting an anxious glance at his companion's pale, beautiful face.

"We must not—surely we can reach home ere they overtake us. And yet they are gaining rapidly; great Heaven, I would rather die at once, than to be captured by those human fiends!" panted Louisa.

"Do not despair. We have a good start, but their horses seem to fly like the wind."

"On, on, on!" again cried young Stanhope, who seemed almost maddened by excitement. "Darrell, make your horses do their best. I am going to give these devils a taste of cold lead."

Grasping his long, glittering rifle, Stanhope checked his horse, took a hasty aim at the foremost Indian, and fired. A dismal yell rang through the air, and the savage warrior tumbled from the back of his steed.

"There is one scoundrel less in the world," said the young man, springing forward after his flying companions. "Perhaps that will check their ardor a little. Hurrah! we are in sight of home! On, Darrell—on, Layton—we will soon be out of danger—we are saved—hurrah!"

For a few moments longer the fugitives fled onward with unabated speed; but as they drew near to Mr. Stanhope's residence, they checked their panting steeds, and looked backward over the prairie, expecting to see the savages still in pursuit. But not a moving thing was to be seen; the vast plain lay smiling beneath the golden light of the setting sun, its solitude undisturbed by a single living form.

"What does that mean?" asked Darrell, turning to George Stanhope.

"Mean? Why, it means that the rascals have given up the chase, and taken themselves back to the deserts from whence they came."

"But the prairie is almost level—they could not disappear entirely in so short a time."

"But you see they have," replied Stanhope, a little impatiently.

"They are gone, certainly—but may they not be concealed in some hollow or grove, waiting for the shades of night to fall, that they may attack your father's house?"

"Nonsense—that is not a Camanche's way of fighting. Whatever they do, they do on horseback. I only wonder, however, that they did not follow us home. They might have captured all of us, and stolen our horses, if they had tried to do so. I suppose the fall of their leader discouraged them."

"Perhaps they have gone to attack my ranche," said Eugene Layton, anxiously.

"It is not likely," replied Stanhope, "and at any rate, your house is well guarded—much better than ours."

"I know nothing about Indian warfare," said Walter Darrell, "but my opinion is that the savages have concealed themselves somewhere, and that they intend to attack us in the night."

"Ah, Heaven, if they should, what could we do!" said Louisa, shuddering.

"Don't be scared, sis," said her brother, "I have no fear of anything of the kind, but it is best to be prepared; so we will ride on homeward, and fortify the house as well as we can."

"A good plan," assented Darrell and Layton, in a breath; and the party hurried home, and commenced defensive preparations, which, owing to freedom from Indian hostilities, had been almost entirely neglected by Mr. Stanhope's household.

CHAPTER III.

WON AND LOST.

Mr. Stanhope was greatly alarmed when he learned the danger through which his children and his guests had passed, and was apprehensive of a night attack; but the night passed away without any cause for alarm; and when two or three days went by without any unusual occurrences, the family abandoned their fears.

"The thieves will not show themselves again soon, I fancy," said George Stanhope, who, with his sanguine temperament, always looked on the bright side of everything. "After this, they will confine themselves exclusively to stealing cattle, and if Juan and his men would shoot a few of them, they would quit that business. Ha! here comes Juan now—and he walks lame. What ails you, man—been having a skirmish with the red-skins?"

George Stanhope was standing with his father in the yard, a few steps distant from the house; Walter Darrell and Miss Louisa sat side by side in the porch, engaged in earnest and interesting conversation, judging from the blushes that mantled the maiden's lovely face. The Mexican approached and bowed respectfully to his employers; but his glance wandered unceasingly toward the pair on the porch, and there was a perceptible scowl on his dark brow.

"What lamed you, Juan?" again demanded George.

"We have had a fight with those cursed Indians," said the herdsman, gruffly.

"Ha! when—how long ago?" eagerly asked young Stanhope.

"On Wednesday morning—and this is Friday," replied Juan.

"By Jove, I'll wager that it was the same band that was after us the evening before. They ran us nearly all the way from Layton's ranche—but I shot their leader, and then they took themselves off in a hurry."

"Doubtless it was the same lot that attacked us," said Juan, with a peculiar smile.

"And did they stampede any more cattle?" asked Mr. Stanhope.

"Yes—the rascals ran off forty or fifty head. We fought them as long as we could; but I got a wound in the leg which disabled me for a while, and the Indians succeeded in stealing a few of the cattle."

"Is your wound serious?" inquired Mr. Stanhope, much concerned.

"No, it is only a flesh wound, and will soon heal, but it caused me to fall from my horse, and I narrowly escaped being captured myself."

"What shall we do, Juan, to protect ourselves against these thieves?"

"I don't think they will bother us again," said the Mexican, confidently. "We killed at least a half-dozen of them, and after this I think they will keep out of our way."

"Perhaps so," said Mr. Stanhope, doubtfully. "You don't think that they will venture to attack us here in the house, do you? We have been preparing for them."

"There is not the least danger of it," replied the Mexican, with a laugh that displayed his glittering teeth. "These Indians are not warriors—but dirty, sneaking horse and cattle thieves. They are the greatest cowards unhung; and I am determined that they shall capture no more of your cattle, if I have to lose my life in their defence."

"Thank you, Juan; I know that you will do all man can do, and I trust to you entirely."

"You are very kind," said Juan, "I must go now to look after the herds. I only came to tell you what had happened. Good-morning."

The herdsman hurried away, trying hard to conceal the limp in his gait. Mr. Stanhope walked up to the porch, and addressed his guest with a complacent smile.

"What do you think of Juan, now?" he said. "Are you satisfied of his honesty."

"He appears to be sincere," replied Mr. Darrell.

"Appears to be? Why, the man was wounded in my service; and I verily believe that he would willingly lose his life in defence of my property."

"He may be all that you say, Mr. Stanhope—but still I do not like his countenance."

"He has such evil eyes, papa," said Louisa.

"Nonsense, girl, nonsense," retorted the old gentleman, pettishly. "His eyes are very black, but of course he can't help that. I'll never believe anything against Juan until I'm forced to."

A week passed away, but no more Indians were seen, and no further thefts on the herds were reported. Evidently the savages had been badly frightened by the reception they had met during their last expedition, and had concluded to let the ranchomen alone.

Walter Darrell was enjoying his holiday to the fullest extent. In the morning he and George Stanhope, accompanied sometimes by Eugene Layton, galloped across the prairies in search or in pursuit of game; and in the delicious coolness of the October evenings, he walked at Louisa Stanhope's side through the luxuriant garden, or gazed enraptured upon her lovely face while she sang tender little songs to the tinkling of her sweet-voiced guitar. He was in love—deeply and passionately; he, whose heart had never been touched by the charms of the belles of his gay native city, had fallen an easy victim to the smiles and blushes of this little country maiden, and he vowed that could he win her love he would be the happiest man in the world. True love is always timid; and the handsome, accomplished man of the world found himself blushing and trembling like a school-boy when he was left alone with the object of his affections. Cupid is also reputed to be blind; and certainly Mr. Darrell's vision was obscured, or he could have seen that the lady looked upon him favorably, and returned his love. But the young man was tormented by doubts. One moment he felt sure that he was beloved, and was straightway transported into Elysium; the next, he fancied that he perceived a look of coldness or dislike in his charmer's face, and he at once became abjectly wretched. But nothing lasts forever, and the fates had willed that Mr. Darrell's suspense should soon come to an end.

Returning from a solitary ramble upon the prairie, Walter Darrell heard the sound of Miss Louisa's guitar, coming from a vine-covered arbor in the garden; and knowing well that his darling was there alone, he hastened toward the spot, although the violent thumping of his heart threatened instant suffocation. When within a few steps of the arbor he paused, arrested by the wonderful loveliness of the girl's face. The climbing vines were parted in places, and through the openings streamed the golden rays of the declining sun, reddening the maiden's cheeks, and brightening her dusky hair.

"She sang of love, and o'er her lyre
The rosy rays of evening fell."

She was singing a tender little love-song, and her voice, soft and musical as a bird's, thrilled her listener to the heart. He longed to rush forward and clasp the singer in his arms.

"How like a beautiful saint she looks!" he thought. "Oh, for a glance of love from those eyes, a kiss from those perfect lips! Can she ever care for me any? Ah, me, I fear not—she is too good, too beautiful, to love such a worthless mortal as I. And yet—"

Walter listened intently, for the maiden ceased her song, and unconsciously spoke her thoughts aloud.

"Does he love me? Can he love me?" she murmured, with a gentle sigh. "Oh, Walter, Walter, if you only knew how I love you!"

"Can she mean me?" thought Walter. "I hardly dare believe it, but I will know my fate to-night. I will declare my love, and win or lose all that makes life dear to me."

Flushing and paling by turns, the young man stood before the object of his devotion.

"Louisa!"

"Mr. Darrell!" gasped Miss Stanhope, springing to her feet, with a face rosier than the Western sky.

"Don't call me Mr. Darrell," said the young man. "Call me Walter—let me hear your sweet lips pronounce my name as they did a moment ago."

"Ah, you overheard my foolish words," said Louisa, covering her face with her hands and bursting into tears. "But surely you will not take advantage of—you cannot think that I meant what I said—I—I—" and here the poor girl broke down utterly, and, sinking back upon the rustic seat, wept without restraint.

"Oh, my darling! my darling!" cried Walter, falling upon his knees in true lover-like style, and, taking the girl's little, trembling hand in his. "Louisa, I was not so presumptuous as to think that you loved me, but your words emboldened me to speak what has filled my heart ever since I first saw you. Beautiful girl, I love you! I love you!—or, rather, I worship you, for love is too cold a name for the passion that I feel for you. May I hope that you care for me a little—that you may learn to love me?"

Louisa answered only by sobs, and the young man went into a still wilder rhapsody.

"Best and most beautiful of women," he cried, "give me a word of hope, or I shall die! Without your love I do not wish to live in this cheerless world. I do not ask you to love me as I do you, for I am unworthy of it—but only say that you do not despise me—that you like me a little—that you will try to love me, and I will be satisfied. Still silent? Oh, Heaven, you do not care for me—my love is hopeless—and I am the most miserable man upon the face of the earth!"

What woman could resist such an impassioned appeal, especially from the man whom she loved? Louisa hushed her sobs, and, raising her head, smiled down though her tears upon her lover's upturned face.

"Walter, do you really love me as you say?" she softly asked.

"Ah, ten times more than I can express," replied Darrell. "Words are powerless to convey an idea of the warmth and depth of my affection."

"Then I am happy," cried the girl, "for however much you may love me, your passion cannot be stronger and deeper than that I feel for you."

"My darling!" exclaimed Walter, throwing his arms around her yielding form.

Her arms fell around her lover's neck, her cheek touched his, their lips met in a long, lingering kiss. I think the joy which dear friends feel when they meet each other in Heaven, cannot surpass the bliss experienced by the youthful lovers in that supremely happy moment.

Long the pair sat there, speaking but little, for their happiness was too great for words. The sun, like a ball of fire, sank out of sight in the crimson West, and the light of day faded into the tender twilight. The lovers were aroused to a sense of terrestrial things by hearing a loud, impatient voice in the direction of the house, calling:

"Walter—Walter Darrell! Where are you, man? Come here at once—I have something important to tell you."

"That is George's voice," said Darrell, not very well pleased. "I suppose I must go and see what he wants; but if you will wait here, my darling, I will come back in a moment."

"I will wait—I always sit here during the twilight to watch the stars appear in the heavens."

"Henceforth your eyes are the only stars I shall watch. Good-bye, my sweet, for a moment."

Darrell pressed a kiss on the girl's lips and hurried from the garden. Louisa bent her head upon her hands, and became lost in a blissful revery. She was aroused by feeling a touch on her shoulder, and thinking her lover had returned, she sprang up with a joyful exclamation.

"Oh, Walter, you have come back!" she cried, throwing her arms around the man's neck.

But she instantly recoiled with a gasp of horror, for the swarthy face against which she had laid her cheek belonged not to her lover, but to her father's Mexican herdsman, Juan.

"So you made a mistake, my pretty one," said Juan, with a low laugh, "but there's no harm done. You may put your arms around my neck as often as you please. I'm perfectly willing."

"How came you here?" asked Louisa, trembling with anger and shame.

"Why, I came to see you, my dear. I knew that this was your favorite retreat, and I came here to have an interview with you—a regular lovers' meeting in the twilight, you know."

"How dare you address me so insolently? Do you think that I would listen to words of love from your lips?"

"Ha, ha, how proud you are, my beauty," sneered Juan. "But a moment ago you seemed mighty pleased to listen to love-vows from a fellow no better than I am."

"Ha! were you listening?" indignantly asked Louisa.

"I was listening—and I must say that your fair-faced lover knows how to plead his cause. I have none of his skill in using pretty talk—but what I lack in that way I will make up in the strength of my arm."

"What do you mean?" gasped Louisa, feeling a vague thrill of fear at her heart.

"Simply that I love you, little beauty, and am determined to make you my wife. Your loveliness has stolen my heart from me, and I can't live without you. If you will dismiss this pretty lover of yours, and let me take his place, things will go on right. If not—"

"If I refuse your magnanimous offer—what then?"

"It will be the worse for you and your friends," replied the Mexican, in a low, deep voice. "Mine you shall be, girl—if not willingly, then by force. But if you defy me, you make me a deadly enemy of your father and friends—and I have the power to send them all to the devil."

"Out of my sight, you presuming scoundrel!" said Louisa, her fiery Spanish blood fully aroused. "Dare to address another word to me, and I will call those who will chastise you as you deserve. I shall inform my father of your insolence, and he will discharge you from his service."

"Not so fast, my lady!" said Juan, with a terrible oath. "No doubt you would do all this if you had the power, but I mean to control you a little."

"You dare not touch me!" cried the girl, turning to leave the arbor.

Quick as thought, Juan threw one arm around her waist, while he pressed the other hand over her mouth.

"Dare I not?" he hissed through his clenched teeth. "We shall see. You are in my power now, pretty dear, and you shall never escape me."

Despite the poor girl's frantic struggles, the herdsman held her securely in his grasp, and bore her rapidly to the farthest part of the garden, where he leaped the fence with his burden in his arms. In this operation he was obliged to take his hand from his captive's mouth, and Louisa screamed for help at the top of her voice.

"Oh, Walter, Walter!" she shrieked, "help, help, help!"

"Ay, howl!" growled the Mexican, "call to your gallant lover, curse him! but it will do no good. You are mine—mine forever—I will take you where your friends can never find you."

And pressing his brawny hand rudely upon his captive's mouth, Juan, the herdsman, strode rapidly away across the prairie, and disappeared in the fast-increasing darkness.

(To be continued in our next.)

THE PROBLEM OF FATE.

Given, a wide old country place
With vines and porches plenty,
A youth with a sentimental face,
And a maiden under twenty.

Given, the passionate heat and glow
Of the sweet midsummer weather,
When searching steady walks the two
By chance are thrown together.

Behold: outvying every bloom,
Upspring the "Eden flower,"
Whose leaves may hold a life's perfume
Or wither in an hour.

MIRIAM EARL.

DR. DORNE'S VIGIL.

BY SPHINX.

"I've no doubt of it—not the slightest!" said the boon companion of the physician sitting near his office-table smoking quietly.

"How long have you known her, Woodward?" asked the doctor.

"About a fortnight."

Dr. Dorne puffed out wreaths of smoke meditatively, then a singular smile stole over his face.

"A brief period to decide *positively* upon the question of her sanity. Out of that fortnight I suppose you've seen her once or twice?"

"Three times!" said Woodward, lighting a pipe and slapping his soft hosanth hat on the side of his head. "Well, I'm off—good-night!" and the door slammed after him.

After his departure, the sole occupant of the room indulged in a weary yawn, then commenced walking leisurely up and down the room with bent head, apparently deep in some retrospection. "Miss Forrester—Miss Forrester—let me see—ah! I have it!" he exclaimed, sotto voce. The name was connected with a memorable night in Baden-Baden. He was passing one of those gilded saloons, where men and women, like so many birds of prey, congregate to clutch in their talons the gold of their victims, and sometimes their lives. Two people were standing near the entrance, a man and a young girl; the persuasive voice of the latter fell in pleading, mournful accents upon his ear. Two minutes later as he was standing near a tree watching them, he heard one of two men in passing say:

"There goes Forrester now! he's sure game. They say he's drinking himself to death, and is borrowing immense sums of money, and losing frequently at rouge et-noir."

While Dr. Dorne was recalling this scene, the memory of which was heightened by the wildness of the March night, he thought he heard above the voices of the elements a sharp ring of the bell. A note was soon handed him by the servant, and a strong current of air rushed through the room. He opened it under the flickering gaslight and read:

"Dr. Dorne, will please come quickly, if possible. Dr. Elbert is out of town.

"E. FORRESTER."

Putting a couple of cigars in his pocket, he found a carriage awaiting him, and stepping in, closed the door and leaned back, speculating upon the conversation with Woodward relative to the lonely life this Miss Forrester led and to the rumor of her insanity now in circulation; he, however, had another clue to the mystery about her. After a ride of two miles, the man turned into the country-seat known by the whole village as Fernhurst. He jumped down to open the gate and found it securely padlocked.

"Golly! the idea of keepin' a professor of physics out in dis yere darned dribble! Why on airth ain't that Pete around? I'll uncurl his wool for him ef he don't answer dis yere cat-call of mine!" And then ensued a yowl, a whistle and guffaw, quite sufficient, Dr. Dorne thought, to awaken the dead.

Around the corner of the house came a figure swinging a lantern.

"Here, Peter, Peter, Punkin' Eater, git along a leetle faster, can't yer?" said the ebony John, mounting the box again.

"Shet up!" was the sole response, as the advancing figure proceeded to admit them.

"Here now, Punkin' Eater—a leetle careful there! Dr. Darn is a sittin' inside a looking great guns at yer! Careful there, it ain't Ole Elbert with his ear-trumpet—so no more poetry from yours affectionately."

This last remark was seasoned with a smart crack of the whip, and the carriage shot through the gateway and up a winding entrance darkly defined by immense trees.

Dr. Dorne had no opportunity of surveying the house, as he was admitted almost instantly, by a middle-aged woman. He followed her up the stairway; and when he reached the first landing, he heard a loud, pitiful cry. The woman walked to a front-room door, in front of which stood a waiter with food apparently untouched. She rapped lightly on the door. There was a noise inside of scuffling, but no words. Then a silence of full five minutes; finally a card was slipped under the door. Dr. Dorne read—

"He is making it impossible to open the door. Take the key from the room opposite, and enter through the room communicating with this one."

The housekeeper did as directed, and with much caution admitted the doctor, in fact almost pushed him into the room. He found himself in the presence of two people. Near the entrance he had reached first, stood a tall man facing a young lady who was standing with her back to the door. She walked quietly forward to Dr. Dorne and gave him her hand.

"You have come quickly! I thank you!" Her eyes were raised searchingly to his, and he felt a piece of paper thrust between his fingers.

He walked forward to the light, and took off his coat, noticing the confusion of the room as he did so.

"I am sorry Dr. Elbert is away when you stand in such need of him, Miss Forrester. When do you expect him home?"

"Not before next week. We miss him very much; we depend upon him so much?"

"The best part of it is, he is a man to be depended upon!" was the reply, as he glanced at the scrawled words on the paper and read—"*Delirium Tremens.*"

"Father," said the lady, "here is Dr. Dorne, a friend of Dr. Elbert's; he has called to see you."

But even while her calm voice was uttering the words, the man was crouching cautiously, and with uplifted finger and a peculiarly alert smile, said imperiously—

"Listen!"

"The wind is making a great racket—it is a wretched night," said Dr. Dorne, coming carelessly toward him.

But the person addressed was creeping slowly toward a heavy escritoire. His eyes were dilated and his breathing audibly irregular. His movements were curious even to the experienced physician, who noted the contracting and expanding fingers, the nervous twitchings around the mouth, and the wily tread. In half a second the escritoire fell with a crash, the bureau had the same fate, and the looking-glass was shivered into a hundred atoms. He then dragged the cords of the shades, and attempted to get out of a window—failing in that, he rushed from door to door, giving them a blow each time he tried the locks. Then he turned upon the physician—

"Unlock these doors!"

"Let us go into the next room, Mr. Forrester." As if the request was not to be disregarded.

He watched his daughter unlocking the door; then he attempted to snatch the keys; she baffled him, however, and he ran into the next apartment and attempted to force open the door leading to the hall; failing in that attempt, he stood surveying the others with enraged contempt.

"The idea of locking a man up in his own house—but hush! what's that?" and he cowered trembling, and shivered in nervous terror. "There it is, crawling slowly on the carpet now. The room is full of these hideous creatures—and look at those armed men near the fire-place. They have come to take our lives!"

Then a succession of awful screams commenced. He ran from one corner to the other. He entreated them to let him out, and to save him from the horrors on all sides.

"You have not taken all stimulants from him?" said the doctor to the quiet, watchful girl beside him.

"Ah! I knew too much for that," was the reply, with a dreary smile of superiority.

Richard Forrester flew past them into the room he had just left, and the medical questions commenced.

"Has he taken any food to-day?"

"No, sir."

"When did this attack commence?"

"Last night, between five and six—he had just come up from the library, when I heard him screaming, and I ran and locked him in and flew for Dr. Elbert and found him out of town."

"I must have some assistance as soon as possible."

"I'll ring for Carter. Poor man! he is quite worn out—we were up all last night with him. I did not think the attack would last so long. We usually get him to sleep after thirty-six hours' frenzy; but he has not slept since the night before last."

She placed her hand on the bell-cord. While she was so doing, she felt her father's hand searching her apron pockets for keys. She turned quickly, and with mere temporary strength from intense excitement was enabled to hold him until Dr. Dorne dropped an anodyne into a spoon. With the promise of brandy, he swallowed it. Some one tried the door, and Forrester was there first. A large, powerful man encountered the tall, slender, athletic figure, and before the physician could assist, the patient had adroitly pushed himself between the door and the servant and rushed down the stairs.

He found his coat and hat, and tried the front door. The three figures stood in consultation at the head of the stairs. Forrester, with a peal of laughter, ran to the back door, but the poor man found himself a prisoner. He then stood with insulted pride in every lineament at the foot of the stairs, looking up at them. Then he shook his cane menacingly, and leaned his elbow on the bannister, with his handsome dark eyes fixed on Dr. Dorne. His face was deathly pale, and his teeth glittering in a wicked smile beneath his black mustache. Dr. Dorne studied him closely—he wondered whether his patient was in his thirties or his forties. There were no signs of dissipation in his face other than a look of insanity from intemperance. The skin was a clear olive, and the eyes brilliant and widely opened. The form was erect and the entire bearing that of a man ready to assert his sway.

With a sudden change of manner he came softly up the stair, and, bowing to Dr. Dorne, said, "I leave it to you, sir, if it is not rather a hard case that I am locked in my own house? I have a little business matter on hand, and will be back soon."

"Let us go in the room and talk the matter over," was the deferential reply.

"No, sir; I shall not canvass the matter—I merely politely request the key of the front door"—but he looked down at his boot as if an adder had crossed it, and, with a piercing shriek, flew up the stairs. Carter's powerful arms were around him, and in a second, he was laid in the bed, but they could not keep him there. Ten hours of terrible excitement ensued, then, completely exhausted, he lay down on the pillows with his eyes wide open, though, and wandering vaguely around the room. Opiates had no effect whatever, but debility and lack of food overcame him for awhile. They gave him beef-tea and brandy and water every twenty minutes, and when Dr. Dorne left at six in the morning, his patient was muttering in a whisper, and lying motionless. When he returned at eleven he found there was no need of locking the doors. Congestion of the brain had set in, and the mind was wandering into incoherent utterances of scenes in the past. "We'll take the little steamer to-morrow, Esther, if the day is clear. It is Rhineck—beautiful day—beautiful—" and he would sing in a low, melancholy voice. The girl at the foot of the bed never raised her head at the doctor's entrance. She remained motionless, save at the times for nourishment or stimulants to be given.

For two or three days Richard Forrester lingered. On the fourth day, early in the morning, he opened his eyes upon the eastern glow of dawn. "Esther," he said feebly. She put her hand in his. "It is all over with me." She never moved, but a spasm just tinged her face and was gone. "I have killed you," he said yearningly. She pressed her lips to his negatively, and shook her head. "I did try to live without drinking, Esther—so hard—oh—my poor life, how sad for you—how—" his voice died away, his eyes closed, and the breath fluttered feebly between the lips. "And no mother," he said, opening his large, sad eyes upon her again. She bathed his forehead with cologne, and he motioned faintly to let him rest, and turned his face to the wall.

After a little while Carter entered softly and put coal on the fire—then he stepped to the bedside, and leaned over and looked at the face turned to the wall. An inarticulate sound escaped the man's lips—there was a smile of peace in the face, but it was frozen there. The hands were carelessly flung out upon the coverlid, but they were cold.

A wild throb came into Carter's heart, he leaned over and silently kissed the dead face—then stood still, and glanced with a look of anguish at the form in the rocking-chair, looking with quiet eyes at the glowing fire.

"Miss Essie!" he said very gently.

She was on her feet in a moment. He stood between her and the motionless form. She tried to pass him—he respectfully held her one minute only—for she threw up her hands wildly, her white lips uttering no sound. "Let me see him," she at last exclaimed; he let her go to the bedside and turned the stalwart shoulders over.

"Father," said she in a whisper, "and do you not hear?" she said in horror-stricken anguish—"you surely have not left me here alone?" she added, seeming to lose her senses, for she knew it was death before she had seen his face—"Why dear—you cannot be so cruel—speak—I can catch one little word—speak!—speak!—speak!" Carter raised her in his arms, her head fell on his shoulders, and he bore her out of the room and down-stairs to the library.

She was simply stunned. He laid her in a corner of the sofa and ran for the housekeeper; the good woman hastened to her and burst into a flood of tears. But Miss Forrester was now sitting upright and gazing at her; she made no replies to anything that was said to her, and at last Mrs. Hall went out leaving her alone.

About an hour after Dr. Dorne passed up the steps. He was astonished to find the shutters bowed. He had thought Richard Forrester would linger some twenty-four hours longer. He went up the broad stairway of the silent house with conflicting feelings, and entered the chamber of death with an acute realization of the life just closed, and the desolation of the one but just beginning. He was in the room talking with Carter a long time. The faithful man told him a sad story of the wasting of an entire fortune in Europe, and the poverty of the father and daughter, and their mutual dependence upon one another—of the death of an aunt who had secured her estate to Esther Forrester solely, and their arrival at Fernhurst and the life during the winter of scenes like he had just witnessed.

Dr Dorne finally came out and down the stairway across the hall to the library. The walnut shutters were very tightly closed in, and a golden light from the sunny hall stole into the room as he entered. He saw Esther Forrester seated near the table and her head resting upon her outstretched arms. His lips quivered. This was the girl people termed eccentric—nay more—insane, to absent herself from the world. What was the world to her? Who would have helped her through the dreary winter to keep a man from suicide and ignominious outer disgrace by preventing his escape and battling with him, and caring for him night and day. He sat down behind her and awaited her pleasure. She raised her head, and arose and walked forward; she opened her lips to speak, then closed them convulsively and rushed from the room.

Dr. Dorne and Carter made every arrangement for the funeral, and Esther sat in her father's room looking at him by the hour, but as rigidly composed as upon the first day. The day of the funeral she hardly noticed anything or anybody. Her eyes were centred upon the dead, and when they bore the coffin from the room she half-arose and mutely stretched her arms toward it, then sat down in a hopeless way that nearly broke Dr. Dorne's heart.

Some two weeks went by. He drove up one day and asked her to ride with him. The sorrow-stricken girl did so, like she did everything else, mechanically. He said very little to her; but once, as he got in the carriage, he laid a little bunch of field flowers in her lap, and a slight hint of a little surprised smile stole over her face. What use was there in remonstrating with this continued mental torpor? The girl had lost her sole relative—her occupation. The doctor did not talk to her as other people did, of forgetting and cheering up and forming plans. No—he drove her now and again long, beautiful drives, and spoke of her father as one who had passed through great tribulation, and of his weakness, not wickedness.

The summer went by slowly. Miss Forrester went out very little—she was often seen among her flowers at Fernhurst, but seldom riding or walking outside of the place.

One moonlight night in September, as she was walking up and down the long verandah, she saw Dr. Dorne coming slowly up the place. She had a camp-chair ready for him when he ascended the steps. They talked as they always did, without restraint, and upon many subjects. He had not seen her yield to her grief once, and Carter and Mrs. Hall said it was the same when with them. She dreaded breaking down.

At the close of the evening she commenced her walk again—that restless pacing was beginning to grow upon her.

"You walk as if you had a longing for wings to fly away," said the doctor, laughingly.

"I believe I'll go to Europe," she said, without pausing.

"Go to Europe!" he exclaimed, standing upright and dropping a cigar he had just lighted.

"I *must* go somewhere—I can't stand Fernhurst any longer!" she said, standing still at the other end of the porch and breaking off a sprig of honeysuckle.

Dr. Dorne thought of his life if she went—some time before he had found out how much his thoughts were bound up in this woman. He held his breath tightly and crossed over to her.

"You say you must go *somewhere*. Why not come to me?" She looked at him irresolutely.

"Esther," he resumed, "I know you are afraid of sickness if you mourn, as you cannot longer avoid doing. My poor child, you cannot cheat yourself of your rights!"

His fine face, clearly discernible in the moonlight, was filled with love and sympathy. With a short, pathetic cry of pain and joy, she threw her arms around his neck and was shaken by the storm of her love for the dead and her love for the living.

The Haunted Cottage.

BY MARY AUGUSTA CLARKE.

"For over all there hung a cloud of fear,
A sense of mystery the spirit daunted,
And said, as plain as whisper in the ear:
'The place is haunted!'"

I was strongly reminded of these lines by Hood, as I lifted the latch of the garden gate, and stood for a moment surveying the house and grounds.

It was a one-story cottage, painted red, the small windows had no blinds, and some of the panes of glass were broken; while into the openings so formed were thrust old straw hats and newspapers. Where the hats came from I could not guess, but they always seem to be at hand to do service where glass is not.

The house had not been painted for many years, and in places there was collected over the worn surface a kind of green mould or moss.

Two tall lilac-bushes grew beside the door and tapped their leafless branches against the windows in a very mournful way.

It was November, and the winds sighed through two lofty pine-trees that stood just inside the old tumbled-down fence. I could not help wondering whether the dead ever lent their dreary voices to swell the sad and solemn music of the swaying boughs.

The grounds were large, and had once been laid out as a flower garden, but nothing had flourished; there was now and then a melancholy rose-bush, standing almost overgrown by the long, dead grass, and the withered stalks of a few hollyhocks blowing about in the wind, and that was all.

And so this was my legacy, and this in future was to be my home. I confess to you freely that, had I not known that my purse contained barely a dollar or two, I should have made the best of my way back to the little town, which I had left about a mile and a half behind me, taken the cars, and returned to the city of Portland from whence I had come.

This was my legacy, and I doubt if any one would have envied me the possession of it. It was left me by the last will and testament of my great aunt, Melinda Wheeler, a woman whom nobody could comprehend.

Her story was an envious one; when she was quite young she had married wealthily, but in a short time she was left a widow. Her period of mourning was short, and she became very gay, and lived in splendor and the excitement of fashionable society for awhile, and then, as if she had exhausted the pleasure of her native land, she went to travel with some gay friends in Europe. After a time the friends returned, but she did not; and they preserved a mysterious silence about her. All that any one could learn was that she was still abroad, and so fascinated with continental life that she would probably never return.

But after some years, and, to the surprise of those who remembered her, she did return; but, in the bowed and wasted woman that she now was, they could hardly recognize the dashing and splendid creature who had left them ten years before.

Her property too seemed to have vanished as strangely as her youth and beauty. She did not remain in the city, but shrinking from old associations retired to this house, away in the northern part of New Hampshire, which she bought even then in a ruinous condition and which had grown more miserable during her occupancy. Here she had lived for many, many years, appearing to be so poor as hardly to be able to buy the food she needed to keep herself alive. She wandered around the house and grounds, with her bent form and strange, wild hollow eyes, muttering and moaning to herself sometimes, and seeming like a very ghost.

She scarcely ever went to town to purchase food. When she did she bought so sparingly that people hinted she had starved herself to death.

These were the stories that the gossips had told me at the nearest village where I had spent the previous night. For myself I had seen her but once, and only once.

I was an orphan, and did not know that I had a relative in the world. I was very poor, and supported myself by taking sewing from the shops. I received a mere pittance for it, and to earn enough to feed and clothe myself I often had to work late into the night.

One evening, about a year before the time of which I am writing, I was sitting in my room sewing by lamplight. I was very busy, but all at once, although I had not heard the door open, I felt that some one was in the room observing me.

I looked up, just before me stood a tall woman clad in a dull gray dress and mantle and wearing a heavy veil. She was very slender, with bent shoulders, her hair was thin and gray. She was regarding me steadily from the depths of her large cavernous eyes, and I was frightened and could hardly suppress a scream.

"Is your name Julia Russell?" said she.

I answered mechanically that it was.

She remained looking at me some moments longer in silence. Then she said:

"I am your great-aunt, Melinda Wheeler, and when I die I shall leave my property to you."

She turned and left the room. I was very much bewildered by her strange behavior, and as soon as I recovered my composure I went down-stairs and inquired of my landlady if she had seen my strange visitor, if she knew who she was, or where she came from; but all that I could find out about her was that she had suddenly appeared in the house seeking me, that the servant showed her to the door of my room, and that she there desired to be left alone.

On the whole her conduct was so strange and inexplicable, that after thinking the matter over awhile, I concluded that the woman was crazy, and finally dismissed the subject from my mind entirely.

But to my surprise, a week or two before the time my story commences, I had received a legal communication saying that my great-aunt, Melinda Wheeler, was dead, and that she had left all her property, consisting of a house and lot and a very small sum in money, to me.

It came very opportunely, for I had been sick, and consequently not able to work for some time. My landlady was a poor woman dependent on her business for a living, and I knew that my helplessness was a burden to the poor woman.

I was weary of battling with the world; though I was still young, I had learned to long for a quiet, peaceful home of my own, where I could feel secure from the storms and buffets of life, and to my tired eyes this legacy had appeared to offer a haven of rest; there at least would always be a shelter for me I thought, and I could obtain sewing from the neighboring town, and so earn my living much more easily than in the city, where I had to pay rent, and where provisions were high.

Accordingly, by my request, the money was forwarded to me; and then I packed my trunk, settled with my landlady, and went to take possession of my legacy.

But as I stood surveying the house and grounds, and recalling the dreary story of my aunt's life, my courage failed me—I repented the hasty step I had taken, and wished myself safely back in Portland.

I had hard work to reconcile myself to the idea of making this dreary place my home; but as there was now no alternative, I tried to reason away my forebodings, opened the gate and walked up the gravelled path, took the door-key from my pocket, turned it in the rusty lock, and entered the house.

Inside there was nothing pleasant or reassuring, the walls of the low, dark rooms were black with smoke; the furniture was of dull mahogany, and the bare, cold floors were painted the same color.

There were four rooms in all; the long, low-walled kitchen—the parlor, with its prim high-backed chairs and curtainless windows—my aunt's bed-room, where her sombre dresses yet hung upon the wall, and her portrait stared down at me with its gaunt cheeks and hollow eyes.

I went through these apartments, feeling more and more depressed the longer I looked; then I climbed the narrow staircase into the room above; it had but one window, and half the glass in that was broken out, there was a bed and one or two old broken chairs, but the numerous dark corners seemed full of ghostly shadows and I hurried down again.

I might as well confess here, that I am naturally very timid, and for me the house and surroundings were particularly unpleasant.

I had ordered a load of wood and some groceries from the village, and I was very glad when the cart that brought them drove up.

The lad who came with the cart was the son of my hostess of the night before; he bustled around in a pleasant way, piling up my wood for me, building fires, and making the place seem far more cheerful with his lively chatter.

I set my table for supper, and with country hospitality, invited him to take tea with me; he accepted the invitation, and I began to feel much more courageous and cheerful; but he spoiled it all when he was going away, by saying—

"I hope you won't see any ghosts, miss. Folks do say they shouldn't wonder if Mrs. Wheeler's spirit walked, she was so kind o' skeery, you know."

After he was gone, I hurried about washing the tea-things and setting the furniture to rights, making the dishes rattle as much as I could, and singing very loud to keep my courage up; but after awhile my voice sounded discordant and dismal to me, my work was done, and no excuse for bustling round being left me, I seated myself by the fire; I did not sing any more, and at length I found myself counting the beating of my own heart, and being very careful not to break the dreary silence that reigned over all the place.

When the early twilight came on, I lighted the lamp and drawing the table up by the fire, sat down and tried to read, but the lamp burned dim and blue, and the uncurtained windows looked cold and comfortless; every few moments I would start up thinking I heard some one tapping upon the glass; then I would remember it was the lilac-bushes, and would settle down again.

At length I became so nervous I could endure it no longer, I arose, took my light and went into the bed-room to go to bed.

There was a dressing-table with a looking-glass hanging over it; I put my light down upon the table, and stood before the glass combing out my hair; unconsciously I breathed a sigh; it startled the silence and I fancied I heard it faintly echoed just behind me. I turned quickly around, half-expecting to see my aunt's hollow eyes regarding me; there was nothing visible however, and I tried to persuade myself that it was only my imagination, but I was forced to watch the mirror with earnest startled eyes, and think with a thrill of horror how I should feel if I suddenly saw another face reflected in the glass; then I grew frightened at my own white, scared look, and blowing out the light with all speed, I jumped into bed.

I fell asleep in a short time, and was glad when I woke to find that it was morning and the sun was shining.

Through that day all went well; I kept myself busy putting things to rights, and doing what I could to make the place more inhabitable. It was quite a task and night found me so wearied out that I went to bed, and slept soundly until midnight; then I suddenly opened my eyes and was wide-awake in the moonlight, and staring at my aunt's picture.

How grim and ghostly it looked, and its cavernous eyes seemed fixed upon me; I could not turn away from them, there was a terrible fascination in their gaze; so I lay there returning the dreadful stare and longing for daylight to break the spell while the cold drops of perspiration stood upon my forehead.

Suddenly as I looked, I heard a long, deep-drawn sigh. It seemed to come from the opposite side of the bed, and I sprang up and looked earnestly in that direction, but could see nothing. Then I buried my head beneath the bedclothes, and tried to shut out sight and sound, but I could still feel those piercing eyes gleaming on me; the dread was worse than the reality; so lured by their painful fascination, I lay watching them till morning light.

Then I arose, built a fire and prepared my breakfast. I was still affected by my last night's experience: but every one is less timid by the light of day, so I determined to go into the bed-room and take a good look at the picture, and endeavor to break the spell it had exerted over me by moonlight.

Was it so very ghostly?

No, I concluded it was not, the face was thin and old and worn, the eyes were sunken and their expression was wild and despairing; they appeared to look forth from a soul whose last hope was dead; the dark hair was combed smoothly around the face, the head was bent slightly forward, and it seemed to be gazing earnestly at me.

The face, though haggard and wan, looked as if sorrow and sickness had marked it more than time. I concluded that the picture was painted while she was in Europe, or shortly after her return, and I pitied my poor old aunt for the suffering that had been her lot ere it changed her from a gay, light-hearted woman to this sad wreck.

I determined to take down the portrait, for I knew that the face would haunt me if I had it constantly before me.

I climbed up in a chair to do so, but the eyes looked into mine so earnestly, and as it seemed reproachfully, that I could not bear it, but got down, went out of the room and shut the door.

That day passed drearily away, and twilight came on; the wind was blowing mournfully through the pines, and the lilacs beat upon the windows like ghostly fingers.

I had been sitting by the window sewing as evening darkened round me. I was glad to remove my seat nearer the fire, for I shivered with the cold.

"I wonder," said I, thinking of my aunt, "whether her soul is now at rest, or is it still doomed to wander a sad ghost among the scenes where her dreary life wore itself gloomily away?"

I had spoken aloud, and my voice echoed drearily through the long, low room; the fire was dying down, and I heaped on more wood, but it did not burn brightly as usual. Now and then there darted up a fitful tongue of flame, but it would soon die down, and it emitted a thin blue smoke, which wreathed slowly upward and filled the room.

I know not why it was, but I sat there late into the night; the clock upon the mantel struck twelve, long and loud. When it was done I still sat looking at the fire; there was no sound save the crackling of the flames and the wailing of the night wind. Then I heard a low, deep-drawn sigh, and glancing up, I beheld standing upon the opposite side of the fire-place a figure, shadowy and unreal in outline, as if seen through a mist. The gray hair was streaming over its shoulders, the head was bowed, and one hand was pressed upon its bosom.

My impulse was to rise and flee from the spot, but my limbs were utterly powerless; my breath came in short, quick gasps, and my heart almost ceased beating.

For a moment we remained thus, and then it raised its large, hollow eyes to mine. It seemed startled at my presence, drew slowly back into the darkness and was gone.

I sat watching the place where it had disappeared for a long time, the cold sweat was standing on my forehead, and I felt like one just awakened from a frightful dream.

After awhile the spell of terror seemed to break. I arose and tried to fly from the room, but a deadly weakness overcame me, and I sank upon the floor in a senseless state that by and by yielded to sleep.

But my slumbers were broken by dreams so fearful that I was glad when daylight came. The snow was falling thick and fast, and the air was bitter cold. In the gloom of the early morning I recalled the events of the night, and I felt that I could not endure to remain in this house another day; that I must get away from the scene of such ghostly visitations, no matter at what cost.

But later in the day, when the storm had cleared away, and the sun was shining brightly, I grew braver; I even tried to doubt the reality of my senses, and persuaded myself that it was nothing but an optical illusion, which might very easily be brought on when my imagination was affected by my desolate surroundings, and my eyes strained by looking too long at the fire.

I finally settled down to this opinion, and determined not to let my cowardice deprive me of a needed shelter. After making this conclusion, I earnestly endeavored to banish the gloomy subject from my mind as much as possible.

After supper I fastened the house up resolutely and went to bed. I slept soundly all night, for I was completely worn out, and the next morning, after breakfast, I started for a walk to the village.

I called upon my friends, the gossips, and they were all very anxious to know how I was getting along, but I preferred to tell them nothing of what I had seen and heard, and, after engaging sewing from some of the families in the village, I returned home.

I had borrowed an interesting book, so that evening I drew a table up to the fire, and lighting a lamp sat down to read.

I had read but a few moments, when a mouse ran out from some cranny in the hearth, and startled me. I sprang up, seized a stick and tried to kill it, but it scuttled away out of sight before I could touch it.

There was a loose brick in the hearth, and I lifted it, thinking it might have run under that: but what was my surprise to find the cavity filled by a picture set in a frame of precious stones.

I took the light from the table and looked at it. I shall never forget that handsome but wicked face. It was the miniature of a man with rich brown hair and hazel eyes: its beauty was wonderful, but in the smile that played around the mouth, lurked treachery and deceit.

I was holding it to the light and looking at it, when suddenly a clay-cold hand touched mine. I looked up, and beside me stood the spectral figure more distinct and terrible than when I had seen it before, and its eyes were regarding me sternly.

Everything swam before me. I gave a faint cry and knew no more.

When I became conscious, the room was dark. I could hear no sound save the mournful sighing of the wind, and the clock upon the mantel striking ten.

I felt sick and dizzy, but I got up and crept to bed without making a light, and then I lay in a state of semi-consciousness until the sun was shining.

I arose and went into the next room; the events of the night seemed like a terrible dream to me, but here was a proof of their reality.

The candlestick was upset upon the hearth, and a brick was displaced, but nothing was to be seen of the picture. I searched for it, but it was not there, and in the place from whence I had taken it lay a small book. I lifted it up, beneath it was a tin box. I had to displace several more bricks before I could take it out of its place of concealment, and when I did, it was so heavy I could hardly lift it. It was bound around with leather thongs. I speedily removed them and opened it. I found to my amazement that it was full of gold and silver coin!

I had to rub my eyes before I could believe the revelation, there was no scrap of writing to tell how it came there, but at length I thought of the book; it looked old and worn, and might possibly contain some information about this buried treasure. I caught it up quickly and ran to the window to decipher its contents.

It was a diary kept by my aunt; the first date was fifty years back, and was written upon her wedding-day. Its last was the week before she died.

I shall not attempt to relate all that was there disclosed to me; the bright and joyful opening of a life so soon to be clouded by sorrow, sin and shame.

In that book I read with tears my aunt's life-history: no sacrilegious pen of mine shall reveal the words written upon those pages in the humiliation of shame and anguish.

It is enough to say that while in England, her beauty won the admiration of a profligate nobleman; she loved him, and though she knew the terrible future she was braving, she fled with him, and under an assumed name lived a life of reckless gayety with an already married man in the cities of Europe. I will not trace their travels or the wanton splendor of their heartless career; heartless save for the mad worship of him, which every line she wrote displayed. I shed tears of bitter shame for her, and it was with a feeling of relief that I read of his desertion; yes, relief, though the agony which the succeeding pages expressed, was heart-rending in its utter hopelessness. She was long ill, and from the brink of the grave she arose, only to plunge herself into the excitement of the German gambling-table, in the vain endeavor to forget her anguish.

I will not attempt to recount her varying adventures. At one time she was almost penniless, then she seemed to be gaining slowly but steadily, and with this slow but steady gain, there seemed to come an intense love of the gold she was gathering up.

Love and hope were dead within her, and in their place and from their ashes rose an overwhelming love of wealth for its own sake, a hoarding passion that seemed to grow with every gain, and finally became the one idea of her life.

If ever her good fortune seemed to be leaving her, she mourned over the loss of each bit of gold as over that of her dearest friend.

From scenes like these, the record suddenly changed, and recounted the long dreary days spent at the house where I was now staying; uneventful, sad and hopeless, she seemed but the ghost of her former self.

Remorse and sorrow, despair and a longing for death; as I read over these faintly-written pages, I could realize how slowly passed the long, dark days, every one of which was noted here.

"God the Omnipotent, Thy hand can brush aside this veil of wickedness and misery, be merciful, oh! God, and lift me from these clouds of darkness and despair, into the light of Thy presence."

This was the end, and as I closed the book in the deepening twilight, I breathed a sigh of relief, that this dark life was over.

I threw the tell-tale pages in the fire; and as I watched their last cinders fly up the chimney, I said, "Now peace, perturbed spirit, there remains on earth not one trace of that life so sad and wayward; and as the flames sweep from existence this life-record, so may God's mercy blot thy evil deeds from the record of that higher and eternal life."

There remains but little to be told. I packed the gold and silver, that seemed to be my true legacy, in my trunk; locked up the old house, and removed to a pleasant city in Massachusetts; where I am still living, in the quiet enjoyment of my competency.

I never found the picture; neither were the mysterious sights and sounds of the old house ever fully explained to me. I have been careful to whom I told this story; but somehow it has leaked out. And the cottage still stands untenanted, and enjoys the reputation of being haunted.

POLLY.

BY MAURICE F. EGAN.

When the morning papers announced among the arrivals at the Mountjoy Hotel, that of the Comte and Comtesse de Crèvecœur, all the beau monde of a certain city were exceedingly anxious to know all about them—particularly as the lady was said to be an American.

The lady members of the beau monde aforesaid having left their cards, and in due time called on the count and his bride, were quite disappointed. These aristocratic republicans declared with one accord that the count's choice of a wife surprised them beyond measure. How a distinguished-looking nobleman like Leon de Crèvecœur could have shown such bad taste as to marry that "ordinary person," his wife, *they* could not conceive.

"Why, they say she was an English teacher—a governess or something of that sort, you know," drawled Mrs. S. Morton Jones, whose only known ancestor was an industrious shoemaker, but, although this was highly creditable in the eyes of sensible people, she took immense care to keep it in obscurity.

"She was an adventuress, roaming about France, *I* heard," chimed Miss Selina Tartar.

"I knew her well," sighed meek Mrs. Creamly, "she taught school down in Eldertown, where we used to spend our summers—"

Here the other ladies exchanged glances—for Mrs. Creamly had unconsciously revealed a secret, namely, that, instead of rusticating at Saratoga or Long Branch, the Creamlys had languished in some out-of-the-way country town.

"I told you so!" whispered Miss Tartar.

"I shall certainly strike the C.'s from my visiting list," returned Mrs. S. Morton Jones, rustling her silken robes.

"Her name was Polly Graham—and she went to France with an invalid lady as a companion. Such luck as some people do have," sighed Mrs. Creamly; "there are my girls—"

But we will leave Mrs. Creamly to bewail the unmarried state of her three daughters, and try to tell, what these curious people were unable to find out—how Polly Graham became Madame la Comtesse de Crèvecœur.

At nineteen, Polly Graham found herself an orphan, with a good education, an ordinarily pretty face, a soft voice (no small item) and a hundred dollars cash.

Thrown on the world, Polly utilized her education by teaching. The salary was small and the work hard; but Polly was content until an invalid lady, Mrs. Colville, attracted by Polly's pretty face and gentle ways, offered to take her as a companion to France. The physicians had said that a sea voyage would be the best thing for Mrs. Colville. This lady was a widow with no near relations, and Polly felt that she would be acting kindly by accepting the offer. Mrs. Colville's means were not large; but the compensation she could give was but little less than that which Polly had received for her services as a school-teacher. And then the prospect of a change—of a break in her dull routine of daily life—of seeing the "plaisant pays de France," which the ill-fated Scotch queen had mourned—Polly was almost bewildered by the crowd of sad and pleasant thoughts that came into her head as she tried to realize this great event in her quiet existence. Polly's one hundred dollars were of great use in fitting her out for the voyage, and with womanly instinct, she used them to the best advantage.

One fine June morning a steamer sailed from a North river pier, and the sunlight from the dancing water was reflected not less brightly in gleams of fresh, girlish enjoyment from Polly's blue eyes as she stood on the deck, feeling a sense of protection for the dark-robed widow beside her.

During the sea voyage Mrs. Colville's health visibly improved, and on reaching land the improvement continued. She desired to visit Brittany, and was especially charmed by the quaint old town of Morlaix. The air agreed with her, she said, and she delighted in the promenades on the quays and heights around; so at small cost a portion of an old house in the Rue des Nobles was rented.

This old house soon became very dear to Polly. The large hall and fireplace, overloaded with exquisite carving, the sombre grandeur of the rooms, the traditions connected with the place which had once been the town-house of a noble family, became part of Polly's life, and colored her thoughts and actions as the white-washed school-house once had done. Old Jeannette, the portress, who went about constantly grumbling and flapping the long lapels of her spotless cap, even she took a liking to Polly, and treated her to several scoldings composed expressly for the edification of the young "Americaine." Existence was very quiet and pleasant here, until Mrs. Colville fell ill, and then the decline of her health—which was as rapid as its late improvement had been—soon ended in death. One sunny day about noon they buried the gentle lady, and Polly was the only mourner. A crowd of dark-clothed peasants stood at a short distance from the new grave, and followed with sympathizing glances the graceful little figure which slowly left the churchyard.

And now Polly felt the drear sense of being alone in the world—alone among a strange people and in a strange land; but people who have to work to live, cannot indulge in sentimental grief with their hands folded; and Polly being one of these people, planned out some work for herself.

She had a regular genius for embroidery and things of that sort. Old Jeannette being an inveterate gossip had taken care to spread the report of this accomplishment, and Polly had received a number of applications from various ladies of the town, who desired fine sewing done. She felt that she had no claim on Mrs. Colville's relatives, as her salary had been paid in advance. The passage-money for home would make a large hole in her little fund, and then she would have but small capital wherewith to commence life in the New World. As the case stood, Polly thought it would be the best to remain at Morlaix, living cheaply and earning as much as possible, at the same time perfecting herself in French, which could be made useful on her return home. Acting on this resolution, she hired one room from Jeannette, and then went to the *curé*, telling him her story. Through his recommendation, she was well supplied with work, and succeeded in getting a portion of the voluminous trousseau of Mademoisse Amélie de Crèvecœur, who was about to be married.

The Chatean de Crèvecœur stood but a short distance from Morlaix, on a gently-sloping wooded hill. Every morning at eight o'clock Polly bent her steps thither and worked at Mademoiselle Amélie's trousseau, returning about dusk in the evening.

Mademoiselle Amélie was a beauty of the indolent brunette type, and she never hesitated about calling the services of her young seamstress into requisition—often very unreasonably.

One evening she took a fancy that the luxuriant orange-tree on the terrace shaded the window of the library too much. Without hesitation, she begged Polly, with her sweetest smile, to move the vase. Polly went out to comply, but before she could touch the vase a young man advanced from behind one of the pillars that supported the balcony, and carried it to the designated place.

He was handsome, but very pale and slender, and the exertion brought a red flush to his face.

"Léon! Léon!" exclaimed his sister, "how can you be so imprudent? Do you want to bring on a relapse?"

"If you want to prevent that, Amélie, you had better ask a servant to do things of this kind, and not force them on a lady," he said, bowing to Polly, and resuming his stand behind the pillar. For several days previously Polly had seen a cloud of cigar smoke hovering around that particular pillar, but she had not imagined that anybody was watching her.

"Poor, dear Leon," sighed Amelia, "he has just recovered from a brain fever. He brought it on by his usual imprudence, Ma'amselle Polly. An infant fell into the river, and its parents stood on the quay, and did not move, but Leon jumped into the water and saved the little creature. He knocked his head against something in coming to the surface, and hence the fever. Leon was very generous to do so, of course, but it was very impolite, to say the least, of a total stranger to take precedence of the child's own father in saving it."

Mademoiselle's hobby was etiquette. Had she been born a century earlier, she would have been in her element at Versailles.

After this Léon de Crèvecœur became a hero in Polly's eye. She began to blush whenever she saw wafts of blue smoke floating from that particular pillar; and it was a strange coincidence that the count was generally there at the time of Polly's passing.

Nobody came to rent the rooms which Mrs. Colville's death had left empty, until two English swells made their appearance in Morlaix.

Polly was returning home one evening, when she met these two. They were dressed in a vulgar imitation of the latest Parisian mode. One of them bowed; the other elevated his eye-glass and muttered:

"A deuced fine girl!"

Polly flashed him a glance of contempt, and then continued her walk, apparently unconscious.

Her indignation and surprise were great when Jeannette informed her that these same individuals had taken Mrs. Colville's rooms. Her first impulse was to leave the house, but then her pride was up in arms. She would not be driven from the dear, old house by these impertinent jackanapes.

Jeannette snubbed them on every occasion, but they appeared to like it. Every day a bouquet was left outside of Polly's door, and just as regularly it was thrown to the foot of the stairs by that indignant young lady.

Mademoiselle Amélie's wedding-day was drawing near, and Polly's nimble fingers found no rest. There was no getting home at dusk now; it was almost midnight when Polly's work was at last finished the night before the bridal eve.

"You will greatly oblige me, Ma'amselle," said Amélie, considerately, "by going out through the back garden, for if Léon sees you, he will insist on accompanying you home—he is so imprudent—poor, dear fellow!—and the night air isn't good for him!"

Polly's cheeks flushed indignantly at this speech, but she obeyed Mademoiselle Amélie's direction. She hurried through the dark and silent streets, fancying that the echo of her footsteps was the sound of some one in pursuit, and shuddering at the sight of her own shadow.

Reaching the house, she found the door locked; however, she had a duplicate key, and thinking that Jeannette had expected her to remain at the chatean all night, she opened the door and hastened to her room. To her surprise, she saw that there was light within it, and she heard the sound of a man's voice. Could Jeannette be there? She recollected now that in her hurry she had forgotten to lock her door; but that voice was not Jeannette's.

Cautiously she applied an eye to the key-hole. Astonished and angry, she became aware that the two men—her fellow-tenants—had taken possession of her chamber.

Her first impulse was to rush down and alarm Jeannette; her second, to find out what the design of these two men could be. Taking the door-key from her pocket, she softly turned it in the lock and fastened them in. Then she breathed freely. She placed her ear against the key-hole and prepared to listen.

"What a soft old fool that Jeannette is!" said one of the men—the one whom she had heard called Fortescue. "I discovered that she had a cousin about five miles out in the country, so I told her that I had passed through that village this morning in my ride, and that he was very sick. She accordingly posted off to see him."

"A good way of getting rid of the old beast!" responded the other. "I don't believe that girl will return to-night. They probably kept her up at the chatean."

"She may not; but speak lower, and the moment the front door opens put out the light and make a rush."

"Do you think she'll consent?"

"She'll have to, and I don't think that she'll make much fuss about it. I've searched her trunk, and there's not anything worth taking in it, except a ring set with small pearls. She's likely in want of money."

The ring to which he alluded was a gift from Mrs. Colville to Polly. As it was rather large, the latter never wore it.

"Hand it here. It's better than nothing."

"No you don't, Jack," said Fortescue; "I'll take charge of it. It is growing late; I'm afraid we'll have to go on our own hook, if that girl don't come soon. Only think, Jack, what a nice job we'd make of it! She knows the chatean so well by this time. If we frighten her thoroughly, she'll show us every hole and corner. There's lots of plate up there!"

"It will be a precious haul, and no mistake. Hadn't we better start? There's no chance of the girl to-night. I'd agree to put it off, but people are growing suspicious, and the authorities here will be down on us in a few days."

"We can't stay after to-night, Brown," said Fortescue. "The place is getting too hot. If that young count gives trouble, just pistol him. As for his sister, she's a screamer—yes," he continued, reflectively, "I know by her looks that she's a screamer—but a good, hard blow will quiet her. The servants are not of much account; Pierrot and Louis are afraid of their shadows."

Polly waited to hear no more. Panting with terror, she ran from the house. Her first thought was of warning the inmates of the chatean. She hastened up the hill with all speed.

The iron entrance gates were closed. The moonlight shone brightly on the silent grounds of the chateau. Polly beat her hands against the iron barriers in despair. Suddenly a man's figure appeared on the border of the artificial lake. He had just thrown his segar away, and was going toward the house. It was Léon.

"Monsieur de Crèvecœur!" Polly called. He did not answer.

"Monsieur de Crèvecœur!"

He turned, stopped a minute, and then came toward the gates. He recognized Polly, and began in surprise—

"Why, Miss Graham—"

But Polly interrupted, her voice thrilling with excitement—

"There's a vile plot to rob the chatean. Don't lose an instant! Get the servants together, and the police! The men are locked in my room at old Jeannette's!"

Perhaps this tirade seemed somewhat incoherent to the Count de Crèvecœur, for his only answer was to unlock the gates, and invite Polly to enter the chatean.

"Oh, no—no! There's no time! They'll escape, and murder us all!"

But the count gently drew Polly's arm within his own, and walked to the house, making her explain.

Then he called his sister, and handed Polly over to her care.

The count armed himself, and with Louis and Pierrot went to old Jeannette's house.

The would-be thieves were found kicking lustily against the oak door. They were trying to dislodge a panel. Brown was secured, but Fortescue knocked Louis down, and escaped. Some time after, he sold Polly's pearl ring in Paris, thus affording a clue which led to his final detection.

As soon as Polly recovered from her fright, Léon took an opportunity of asking her an old, yet new, question—and this was how Polly Graham became the Countess de Crèvecœur.

☞ It is quite remarkable that the Parisians have to teach us not only taste, but neatness. No imported street-dress trails on the ground. A French lady would scorn to sweep the sidewalk with her gown, and could not be made to believe that a lady of any nationality would do aught so untidy. But with shame let us admit that Americans, some of them genuine ladies, do this disgusting thing.

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THE
SATURDAY EVENING POST.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, JULY 12, 1873.

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LETTERS FROM ZIG.

A CHAPTER ON PICNICS.

It is just a little bit later than the season when a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love. It is just a little bit later, too, than the time of strawberries and religion. Strawberries and devotion run naturally together, I read lately in a newspaper somewhere; and I've often noticed, just as the newspaper said, that strawberries are in some mysterious way connected with the paying off of church debts. They are the infallible dependable for that purpose. But it's a little past the season of strawberries.

It is the time of picnics.

It is the time when the sprouting springtime fancies of young men and maidens begin to take root. It is the time when the care-worn countenance of the mother of a family takes on a new wrinkle or two, as she prepares to go into the woods for a day and amuse herself. If there's a blessed martyr on earth, it's the mother of a family who takes her olive-branches picnicing. Rome was built with less stupendous preparation than she must perforce make for the purpose of spending one thoroughly uncomfortable day. In the first place, there are the four girls in ruffled pantalets. Four small female girls in tucked white dresses, dumpy little overskirts and ruffled pantalets. It takes weeks and weeks of anxious thought and labor to get up four small girls for a picnic. Then there are the two obstreperous boys in buttons and puckered waists. You might do Europe with less trouble than mater-familias has to take over the Sunday jackets and buttons of the two obstreperous boys. Mother Eve didn't know what she was doing when she set the fashion of wearing clothes. If she had once thought of tucks and puckers, I'm sure she'd never have done it, never. She'd have had more mercy on her daughters.

After the four pairs of ruffled pantalets and two puckered waists are all in trim, there's the lunch-basket to see after. Picnic-ers are of two kinds, those who take lunch and those who don't. People who don't take lunch go with the expectation of sponging their lunch off the people who do. It all falls upon the shoulders of poor mater-familias to provide lunch both for her gang of olive-branches and for the gang of sponges who scent her generous lunch-basket from afar, and hang upon it like big, ravenous roaches around a loaf of baker's bread. I declare I'd let the gang of sponges starve.

On the way to the picnic ground, mater-familias is in mortal terror lest some of her six olive-branches fall overboard off the steamer and be drowned, or out of the wagon and get their necks broken. At the picnic ground, it is just the same, only a little more so. Mater-familias spends the day in running around after her unruly offspring and counting noses, troubled and fearful lest one of the six should be lost, or brought back to her crushed and mangled from running under horses' feet. Young ones always do run away at a picnic, and act like all possessed generally. In nine cases out of ten, pater-familias doesn't go to the picnic. He knows too much for that. He goes off once in a while to nice bachelor fishing parties, and on pleasant hunting excursions. Or if he does go to a picnic with his wife, he is apt either to go off to a retired, shady place and take a good smoke with one of his old chums, or else spend his time flirting with some pretty young lady. Isn't it so? Haven't I seen it a dozen times? In the evening mater-familias gathers together her six olive-branches, counts noses again, and marshals 'em off for home, with their clothes torn and dirty, and every one of 'em tired, hungry, sleepy, quarreling, and cross as little bears. Mater-familias, worn out with vexation, worry and disappointment, every bone in her body aching with weariness, gets home and to bed at last, a helpless victim to the customs of civilization. How delightful it is to go to a picnic with your six children, to be sure! But if I was a woman and had that many children, I'd keep 'em locked up somewhere, and let 'em out one at a time.

People who are in the habit of martyrizing themselves by going to picnics may be divided into lovers, family parties, young ladies, beaux and bummers. Lovers go for the same reason that they go everywhere else—to be together: the beaux go to see the young ladies, and—they wouldn't own it, I know—but I'm positively certain that young ladies go to picnics for nothing else than to see the young gentlemen. The bummers go to let loose unrestrained the native, unwhipped rowdy within them: while the family folks—I've thought of it a hundred times, and I'm blest if I can tell what staid, quiet married people go to picnics for. Every evening of the world I see hosts of tired, snappish-looking married people wending their way homeward from picnics, and I always wonder away down in my secret soul whether they go home laboring under the very thin and miserable delusion that they have been enjoying themselves. I don't know, I'm sure. But you can tell in a moment who the married folks are, just by watching the picnicers as they go home. If you see two people sitting side by side in a sort of dull, stupid silence, or else engaged in a slight conversation which is rather on the snappy order, suggestive of vinegar, needles, and things, ten to one those two people are married folks. They have been to the picnic, and worn the day through in a dull, spiritless way, and now they are going home, wishing they had stayed there.

What a thing it is to be "wooed an' married an' a'l"

Not so the lovers return home from that celestial picnic. They have been out under the green trees, as green as themselves, in a state of indescribably toploftical bliss all day. They have sat side by side and spoken nothings or nothing, just as the case may be, sufficient to themselves, without the need of a single human being on earth to help them out with their selfish happiness. They didn't even need the lunch basket! Bless you, no! If they mingle in the crowd of youngsters who go to enjoy themselves socially, these demented two are evermore singling each other out, and casting spooney, sheep-eyed glances at each other. He wears the most excruciating tight boots, and doesn't mind it at all. She stilts herself upon the extremest of little pegs of heels which pitch her painfully forward at every step, and laces her little corset till the strings snap, and thinks she is in Heaven. What are corns, bunions and jammed-up ribs to them? Nothing; not even variety. They too go home mostly in silence, but it isn't like the silence of the married couples. No; no more than the creaking of an old lobelia doctor's rusty sign in the wind is like the unutterable breathings of an Æolian harp. That's what it isn't. The lovers' silence is the silence which speaks unspeakable things. So they go home in the gloaming, hand-in-hand, in a state of idiotic bliss which a newspaper correspondent would profane by poking his pen into it. That is how lovers enjoy a picnic.

And yet—

All the snappy old married people were lovers once.

Next after the married people usually the young ladies and the beaux go home, merry, giggling and chattering. They all wear tight boots and tight corsets too, but they don't mind, either. It's only the middle-aged married people who mind being uncomfortable and sweltering through a hot day in their Sunday clothes. As the young folks all go merrily home together, you will notice that the girls who have beaux look happy, and the girls who haven't beaux don't look so happy. It's nature. After the merry young people, the lovers come straggling home, last of all except the bummers, who bring up the extreme final little end of the picnic, in an exceedingly disreputable manner. They went out bummers, and they come home drunken rowdies, bellowing idiots, with their hats mashed in, their heads lopping from side to side, and their tongues braying to the tune of every vile, silly, profane utterance known to human speech. What beasts they are, what caricatures of humanity! A baboon is a more manly-looking creature than a drunken man.

Originally a picnic was an entertainment where each person contributed something toward one general table, and thus they all had a feast together. You will perceive that the idea of a picnic has changed very much since the good old times. But I can't find the derivation of the word. I take it, therefore, to mean just what the word says, —to pick Nick, and Nick, in the old northern mythology, meant a very bad person indeed. ZIG.

LETTER FROM NEW YORK.

DEAR POST—I don't know that I am in the mood for writing to you; I don't know that I am in the mood for writing to anybody.

The weather is warm—hot, I would have said, only that a long-ago school-ma'am informed me that the word was inelegant. And there was such a dreadfully scandalized look on her face when she mentioned it, that I have never said it since, and I wouldn't for anything. She lived an old maid until just before the war, when she went South, or died, I forget which, but in either case she found things hot, I guess.

But summer is a listless, dreamy, lazy time, isn't it? One feels so ambitionless, and there is so little that is new and startling. To be sure the morning paper brings to us its daily lists of murders and suicides, and elopements and divorces and disenchantments; but there are so many of them that one grows tired and ceases at length to give them even a passing glance. In the city one sees nothing to interest. Everybody is at Long Branch, Saratoga or Newport, and the only comfort one has is listening to the society gossip as it is retailed by those whom business brings occasionally to the city. I saw an estimate the other day of the marriages that had come about through watering-place flirtations, moonlight rambles on the beach, etc., and of the ones that had stood the test of years and were still, so far as any one knew, peaceful and serene. I don't recollect exactly how they made it, but I believe there was about one in every fifty that turned out a genuine union of souls—all the rest were marriages of convenience or necessity, or something of that sort; for be it known, when a lady gets along in the thirties, something has got to be done; and usually she rushes frantically into society, dons her most youthful dresses, and possibly as a last effort tries the effect of a pink bonnet; and if she is fortunate, manages to hook some boy ten years her junior, and then, because he awakens to a realizing sense of his position, and cannot forgive her fading charms (they say a man never forgives his wife for growing old), she gets jealous and moody, and tearful and despairing and cross; and then the boy-husband stays late at the club, frequents billiard-saloons, drives fast horses, and then there is a grand row and a divorce, and that ends it. The husband congratulates himself upon having got rid of a burden, the wife congratulates herself that she isn't an old maid anyhow, and the lawyer pockets his fee and is happy.

In fashions there is not a great deal that is new. There are a thousand eccentricities of the toilet this season, but if I am not mistaken, I have already mentioned every one of them.

The ladies seem to run all to show this summer, and anything that can add to the effect, anything that can be seen a long way off is received with rapture. They seem to have everything on a string—or on a chain, which amounts to the same thing. The latest idea is suspending the fan from a chain of jet. It don't matter whether the chain is fastened at the belt or worn around the neck, the only object being, that the fan shall hang nearly to the bottom of the skirt. A few yards, more or less, of chain is of no consequence. And then the vinaigrette is suspended from the belt, and the umbrella and the shopping-bag are suspended from the belt, and among it all one does not wonder that the belts have great steel buckles (oxydized silver I mean) that hook together in the back, and look as though they might be portions of a suit of armor. And speaking of buckles, what a rage there is for oxydized ornaments this season! I cannot imagine any reason for it, but such is the case nevertheless.

Oxydized is not to me a euphonious word, but the ladies like it and use it upon all occasions. If a thing is oxydized it is all right, and if it is not oxydized it is all wrong. I presume a wedding present of pure silver or gold would'nt be appreciated this summer—always provided any one could be wild enough to enter into such an alliance at such a season. Though that reminds me that I have a friend who is just wild enough to do that very thing. The marriage takes place on the first of July, and the happy couple take the first steamer for Europe. I suppose they will get lots of oxydized presents as they are well beloved by everybody, though in consideration of the season, I understand one party is deliberating between an ice-cooler and a refrigerator as a bridal-gift—a nice oxydized ice-cream freezer would be in order too.

I haven't heard yet what the bridal trousseau is to consist of, but warm as it is, I presume there will be a dozen of everything. And the dress is to be of white silk with overskirt of tulle looped with orange blossoms; I don't suppose the young lady would believe she was married at all without that, and the bridegroom is expected to appear in the regulation black suit. How I do pity him! As long as it is so fashionable, I'd get myself oxydized, and throw the black suit in the river, if I was in his place.

The latest novelty in evening dresses is tulle in two shades of color. Tulle sashes are worn with these dresses. They are looped loosely around the waist and caught with bouquets and garlands of flowers.

A new fan, known as the flirtation fan, is formed of white or colored tulle, or tarletan, with pearl or ivory sticks. The idea I believe originated with a New York fashion artiste.

A novelty in the shape of a bonnet has also made its appearance direct from London, and named after the retired danseuse, Taglioni, who is now in reduced circumstances, and giving dancing lessons the proceeds of which scarcely afford the common necessities of life. The bonnet is much larger than the ones we have been accustomed to wear, and shows less trimming, which looks like a return to old times and old fashions; and it would not be strange at all if another year should bring with it something that can in good faith be called a bonnet.

Ladies are tired of the little trifles of lace and flowers, and any change will be warmly welcomed—especially if it makes its appearance in weather like this.

Yours, OLIVE KING.

HOME AND SOCIETY.

"WORDS FITLY SPOKEN."

These words of Solomon, the Wise Man, contain a whole sermon; and when we ponder upon them, we can readily follow out the illustration he makes. Kind words, or "*words fitly spoken*," are indeed most essential to home-comfort, and there can be *no* comfort without them. Yet we all know of homes where rude and angry words are constantly heard between fathers and mothers, and brothers and sisters. Either from constant habit or from thoughtlessness the father speaks in harsh tones, and without choice of words, when he expresses his desires, sentiments or wishes; and the mother gives her orders in scolding tones of voice, while her epithets and phrases are not of the gentle or persuasive order. She forgets that—

"The mother, in her office, holds the key
Of the soul; and she it is who stamps the coin
Of character, and makes the being who would be a savage
But for her gentle cares, a Christian man;
Then crown her queen o' the world."

Of course the younger members of the family endeavor to imitate their elders, and, in their turn, will fret and fume and scold over every little, petty, trifling matter until life becomes a system of constant torture; and truly there is "*a hell on earth*," even if our theology makes us doubt one in another sphere.

In such a family as this there is little comfort or pleasure for the members; and if visitors enter it, there is none for them.

Continual, habitual bickerings have, perhaps, become a second nature to the parents and children; but the guests may not have served such an apprenticeship, and to them the rude and angry words bandied from one to another in common conversation, become decidedly appalling, and it is with a sensation of deep relief that they make their *adieux*—without desiring to add—*au revoir*.

Far be it from us to assert, however, that these families, wherein "*words fitly spoken*" are seemingly an unknown tongue, do not feel for each other the kindest emotions and tenderest sympathies; but they have become used to these unkind expressions, until they have lost their point; yet they would not allow that they intended to exhibit any want of natural affection. And when sickness or trouble comes to any one of their number—they will manifest the liveliest solicitude for them, but while in health and prosperity, the gentle words and tender endearments are forgotten.

We recall a family with whom gentleness and tenderness were not frequent guests—and yet their lines were laid in pleasant places; and fortune had favored them, giving them a charming home with lovely surroundings, and healthy, promising children. But the father's tones of voice were harsh and rude—and the mother followed suit, and trained her children with scoldings, and a high pitched key-note of government.

A young aunt, with lovely, caressing ways, came to visit them, and was greatly shocked at the condition of the *menage* into which she was introduced.

Her voice was sweet and low—"an excellent thing in woman,"—and she vainly endeavored to train her young nephews and nieces into some respectable ideas of behavior, etc.

One day she went to call a small child into the house, and strained her voice with the exertion of making him hear her. Failing, however, in her attempt, she was forced to go for the child.

When asked if he did not hear her, he replied—

"Yes, indeed I did, Aunt Lizzie, but you should have called louder and stronger; should have said—'Jamie, come directly in, or I'll whip you severely,' and then I should have run as fast as I could have scampered."

So unused was the child to the soft, dulcet tones of persuasion, that they were of no effect upon him; but the curt, harsh tones of reproof could control him.

Alas! that these things should be! that men and women should so debase their voices and language, that their tones become coarse and repellant; and their language abusive and rude, while they are utterly unconscious of it; and if informed of such failings would not willingly admit them.

"It is a good investment to have good-nature, and so much of it that you exhale it, as flowers do their odors; for you do not know who will take the comfort of it, though there may be hundreds and thousands that you never heard of who will be recipients of the blessed influence of your disposition."

And ill-nature is undoubtedly the root of all evil in many households. If children hear their fathers and mothers indulge in quarrelsome remarks, it naturally follows that they will also be addicted to them; and when they take upon themselves the responsibility of a home—the fear is that they may not have learned self-control while they were young; and cannot understand that "*words fitly spoken are like apples of gold in pictures of silver*," when they come to manhood and womanhood. We all of us know of persons who are so ill-natured, so rude and coarse, that even when they are willing to do us a favor, it will be done in apparently so uncivil a manner that we are unwilling to accept it; while there are others who accept the favors which we offer as kindly and courteously as possible, in such a rude manner, that we almost regret that we conferred them.

Yet, as an usual thing, courtesy breeds courtesy, and even the rudest and harshest persons will soften their manners somewhat when with those who are courteous, civil and cordial.

Addison tells us that two persons who have chosen each other out of all the species with a design to be each other's mutual comfort and entertainment, have in that action bound themselves to be good-humored, affable, discreet, forgiving, patient and joyful with respect to each other's frailties and perfections, to the end of their lives.

These seem to us "*words fitly spoken*."

DAISY EYEBRIGHT.

A KISS.

"Among thy fancies, tell me this,
What is it that we call a kiss?"

What is there in a fervent kiss,
When loved ones meet and part?
A taste of Heaven's own health of bliss,
Uniting lips and heart.

A talisman of grace, when given
From mother dear to son,
Guarding the soul yet pure for Heaven,
Far from the Evil One.

A tie of friendship, bond of love,
Cementing kindred souls;
Its rapture hails from heaven above,
And *Love*, pure, chaste, controls.

GRACE GARLAND.

Biographical Sketches.

EX-PRESIDENT THIERS.

BY MAURICE F. EGAN.

The rules of the French Corps Législatif require that any member intending to speak must inscribe his name on the book, and await his turn. In this way all Paris knows beforehand who is going to speak. Whenever it was understood that Monsieur Thiers would hold forth, the struggle to obtain seats was almost as great as on a Nilsson or Patti night at the opera; and yet this orator is a little, withered old man, with a shrill nasal voice, and without grace or dignity. Where was the charm that made people listen for hours without any sensation of weariness? The attraction lay in the inexhaustible freshness, vivacity, and versatility—in the incomparable tact of this little old man, who, although President of France, more than once prime minister, a renowned author, a grand officer of the Legion of Honor, and wearing all the orders of the world, was once a penniless boy, possessing only talent and ambition.

Louis-Adolphe Thiers was born at Marseilles on the 26th Germinal, year 5 of the Republic (April 16, 1797). His father was a mechanic—a blacksmith, it is said. His mother came of a good family, greatly reduced in circumstances. Young Thiers showed some talent, and through the influence of his maternal relatives, he obtained a scholarship in the lyceum of his native city. At the age of eighteen he went to Aix, to pursue the study of law. At Aix he met his life-long friend, M. Mignet. The two friends studied just sufficient law to pass their examinations, but to the study of literature, philosophy, history and politics, they devoted themselves enthusiastically. Thiers became a party leader among the students, and made himself very unpopular with the professors by his vehement declamations against the then-existing form of government—that of the Restoration—and by fervently invoking the spirit of the fallen Republic and Bonaparte's imperial rule.

In this connection one of his French biographers relates an amusing anecdote. The respectable and conservative Academy of Aix had offered a prize for the best eulogium on Vauvenargues. Theirs determined to win it, and sent in his eulogium. His production was beyond comparison the best submitted to the judges; but, knowing his political opinions, they hesitated to declare the prize his, and announced that they would reserve their decision until the following year. On the appointed day Thiers's manuscript again appeared; but in the meantime an eulogium had come from Paris that threw the other attempts entirely in the shade. This new production was eagerly crowned by the judges, who, however, named Thiers's paper as the second in merit. The name of the victorious competitor was then unsealed, and the vexation and surprise of the learned judges must have been great when they read, "Louis-Adolphe Thiers." He had sent his manuscript, copied in a strange hand, from Aix to Paris and from Paris to Aix, and had thus come off both first and second best.

Thiers began the practice of law in Aix; but it was an aristocratic city, and he bore a plebeian name, and possessed neither rank nor reputation; he therefore started in company with Mignet for Paris. The friends established themselves in the fourth story of a house in an obscure street. The whole furniture of their room consisted of "a modest chest and a bed of walnut-wood, with curtains of white calico, two chairs and a little black table which could scarcely keep on its legs." From this small corner of the great city, Thiers watched events and waited for his opportunity. In 1823, Manuel, the orator of the people, was expelled from the legislative chamber. Thiers at once ranged himself on the popular side in opposition to the Villèle ministry. Through Manuel's influence he was enrolled among the editors of the *Constitutionnel*, then a very influential organ. He was presented to Laffite, Casimir Périer, Baron Louis, and even the exclusive Talleyrand.

Thiers seemed to possess a limitless capacity for work. While writing for the daily press, mingling in political life and frequenting the most brilliant salons, he found time to write his celebrated "History of the French Revolution," which was followed by the "History of the Consulate and the Empire." Of his abilities, M. de Cormenin, a political enemy of Thiers, said, "Thiers is a demon of cleverness. He has it at the very ends of his fingers. I would not hesitate to affirm that he could discourse for three hours in succession upon architecture, poetry, law, naval affairs, strategy, although he is neither an architect, nor poet, nor lawyer, nor sailor, nor soldier, provided you gave him a few moments after dinner for preparation."

Thiers was one of the first to sign the protest against the five *ordonnances* of Charles the Tenth—an act of courage that placed his head in danger. By these ordinances the government dissolved the chamber before it had met, suspended the liberty of the press, and altered the mode of holding elections. The protest which Thiers signed was the prelude to the insurrection of July 29, 1830. The people arose, and expelled Charles the Tenth. On August 9, Louis Philippe ascended the throne, which on the third day of the same month had been declared vacant, and Thiers assumed the office of Counsellor of State.

From thenceforward Thiers was one of the most successful political leaders that France has ever known. To other men consistency might have proved an obstacle, but not to Thiers. He pursued his course serenely indifferent to that virtue; and, in fact, inconsistency is the key-note to his success. He changed with the times, and he has always deserved the title which pleases him best—"The man of the situation" (*L'homme de la situation*). He had helped to overthrow Charles X.: he had been twice the prime minister of Louise Philippe, and yet he was instrumental in the downfall of that very successor! At an age when most men think of retiring from the active duties of life, we have seen him—as President of a Republic—pilot France through a terrible crisis. It was only the other day—the 24th of May last—that he resigned his office to give place to President McMahon. He will resume his seat in the Assembly, probably to emerge—if he lives long enough—into power as one of the pillars of the next form of government that may bless or afflict France.

UNDER THE PANSIES.

Across the kirkyard path I go;
The air is delicate and sweet;
Yet, somehow, as I pass, the blood
Subdues its fervor and its heat,
For there's a grave beside the tower,
And there are pansies at my feet.

A little grave, cut off from all,
On which the rounding shadow falls;
Close guarded by a willow-tree,
From whose green core the shrills calls;
And where, when summer eve is low,
The mavis pipes sweet madrigals.

It was a brief, mysterious life—
Her life, whom late we buried here;
It saw the promise of the spring,
But not the harvest of the year;
The sweet head drooped beneath the sun,
Ere yet the sun had turned it sere.

A spirit entered at our door,
In fairest vestiments of clay;
The lamp was lit, the board was spread,
And we entrusted it to stay;
But, voiceless as the phantom came,
So voicelessly it passed away.

It knew us not—we knew it not;
How could we hope to penetrate
The robe of perfect silence which
Upon its limbs unwrinkled sate—
The robes whose borders caught the sheen
That glows beneath the folded gate?

Weak words were ours—vague forms of thought,
Which wrestled with the striving sense:
Her solemn eyes looked straight in ours—
The pure lids raised in fair suspense;
Our language was the speech of flesh,
And here the angel's reticence.

Yet when the starry Christmas morn
Came, and with one reluctant sigh,
She cast her gentle weeds aside,
And, silent, passed into the sky,
We wept, though knowing we had given
A hostage to eternity.

And here we laid her, underneath
The quiet of the changing skies,
And filled the mould with pansy roots—
For pansies typify her eyes—
Ours—not the eyes that guide her wings,
From tree to tree, in Paradise.

She did not know us—oh, so young!—
She would not answer smile or call;
But Heaven which sealed her baby mouth
Ordains the flower's life and fall;
And, in its stainless vision, yet,
Our darling may remember all.

A RUSTY NAIL.

BY MAY MEREDITH.

"But, Miss Amy, I don't believe you are really afraid of dogs," Guy Stuart said to me one summer afternoon as we were roaming through the woods. "It is only a little affectation on your part. By the way, I think I see my beautiful pet Nero over there through the trees. I will call him to me."

"Don't, Mr. Stuart," I said quickly. "Please don't; for, foolish as it may seem, I am more particularly afraid of your dog than of any other. He is so large, that I never see him without a shudder; indeed, if you call him, Mr. Stuart, I will run away. You don't know how fast I *can* run," I added, laughingly, hoping thus to divert his attention from that dog.

But, alas, for my hope! I had scarcely spoken, when he gave a short whistle, and a second after, a huge Newfoundland dog bounded toward us. I shuddered, and scarcely knowing what I did, rushed along the narrow path.

"Catch her, old doggie," I heard Guy say merrily; then, as the dog followed me, I flew on, faster than before. I was wonderfully fleet of foot in those days; but, of course, no match for the dog, and had I not bethought me of a plan for baffling the pursuit, no doubt Mr. Nero and his master would soon have caught me. But, I recollected an old, disused house, which had a whole door though, and to reach that house was now my object. I strained every nerve, and at length, breathless, rushed into the room, and slammed the door behind me.

Feeling safe now, I leaned against the wall, waiting the advent of my pursuers. I was very angry with Guy Stuart; very angry indeed. He knew my antipathy to dogs, indeed my absolute horror of them, and still he had deliberately set his dog on me. I determined not to listen to any of his excuses, and just as I decided upon this, Mr. Stuart reached the door, and tried to open it.

"Miss Amy," he said in a laughing voice, "Nero and I have repented our thoughtlessness and come now to sue for pardon. Will you forgive us?"

"No, I will not," I answered quickly. "I think you were mean, unkind and ungenerous, and I hate you for it."

He was silent a moment, and when he next spoke I fancied his voice was not so firm.

"Miss Amy, believe me, I did not intend to annoy you, and am truly sorry for my fault. Will you not let me in now to beg your forgiveness?"

"No," I said sullenly. "You shan't come in."

"Indeed!" he answered sternly. "I want to see you and I will."

"Beware of me," I replied hotly, roused by his imperative tone. "When I am as angry as I now am, I'm scarcely responsible for what I do or say."

He hesitated a moment, then with one strong push opened the door, and Nero by his side, appeared on the threshold.

Some fiend of evil possessed me, I think, for hardly knowing what I did I stooped, and picking up a handful of rusty nails lying on the floor beside me, I threw them angrily at the man and dog before me. Remember, reader, I was only sixteen years old, an unrestrained child, accustomed always to have my own way, and as yet undisciplined by the trials of the world.

Scarcely had I given vent so rudely to my passion, when it seemed to melt away, for Guy Stuart, with a start and groan, had fallen to the ground and lay silent now before me. To rush to him and examine the pale face was but the work of a moment. Yes, my hand had killed him, I thought, and I shuddered as I saw a small stream of blood trickle from his forehead, where one of those nails—those hateful, hateful nails—had struck him. Ah, how bitter was that first moment of remorse for my uncontrolled temper, and how that one moment of misery taught me a life-long lesson!

I felt as I gazed on him that my whole heart was his, and unable to repress my tears, I threw myself beside the prostrate form, and gave way to my grief. After all I was only a weak woman, and now that the tide of passion was spent, and my best-loved one wounded even to death, as I thought, by my hand, what could I do but kiss the upturned face, and murmur to him the dearest words of love.

"My own darling," I whispered. "You didn't know I loved you so well, did you, precious one? And to think that this nail—" I continued, picking up one wet with his blood—"should have been sent by my hand! Oh, Guy, Guy, forgive me!"

With all my might I threw the nail far from me, then turned and pressed one long kiss on the now silent lips. As I did so a shiver seemed to pass through him, and the next moment a pair of strong arms had drawn me to a warm, true heart!

"And you are not hurt?" I asked, in confusion. "Did you—could you—"

But here he stopped me.

"Yes, my own darling, I did and I could; and I know too just exactly how much you love me, and how sorry you are for having been such a naughty girl. Will you let your fault balance mine now, and shall we 'kiss and be friends?'"

I hid my blushing face on he shoulder, and leaning over me, he whispered his tale of love.

"And that old, rusty nail did not hurt you, at all?" I asked after awhile.

"Yes, Amy darling," he answered gravely, "it inflicted on my forehead a painful wound, which, as you know, rendered me alike oblivious to sense and sound,—a wound too, so deep, that it has reached my heart, and will make itself felt all through my life. Who knows that, but for this rusty nail and for my happily-thought-of ruse, Miss Amy Flemyng might ever remain Miss Amy Flemyng? Now, though, she will soon become Mrs. Guy Stuart, thanks to her kind offices as nurse, and to the compassion of the wounded man, who indeed would be ungrateful, did he not make some reward to her for her watchful and affectionate care of—"

Here I placed my hand over his mouth.

"Hush, Guy. You know I would never have said what I did, if I hadn't thought you almost dead, or at any rate quite, quite insensible."

"Yes, my little one," he answered, taking me in his arms, "I won't tease you any more. But what has become of poor Nero, all this time?"

As Guy uttered his name, the dog approached his master. I shuddered, and turned my head away.

"Amy," Guy said, almost sadly, I thought, "won't you for my sake, try to overcome this foolish fear of yours? Give me your hand, darling. I want you to pat Nero's head. He must learn to love his young mistress."

Of course, I obeyed him. One look from those dark eyes, and a few more caressing words sufficed—and from that hour, I began to get over my unaccountable dislike to dogs.

As we started homeward, Guy picked up the rusty nail.

"I shall keep this dear old nail in remembrance of to-day, Amy, darling."

"And will you try to forget my outburst of temper?" I asked. "Indeed—I will strive more than ever to control myself;" and tears filled my eyes, as I thought of the moment when I saw Guy fall.

"Crying, my darling?" said Guy, turning my averted face toward him. "Look at me, precious one, and know that I love you all the more for your faults."

On my watch-chain, reader, I wear a charm, which excites the curiosity of many of my friends. It is a tiny nail—rusty, 'tis true—but none the less precious to me!

LULLABY.

French has given many illustrations of the amount of history which is wrapped up in a single word. He has done great service in stimulating lovers of linguistic studies to work in the same line of observation and research. Any one of tolerable quickness may find stores in words that fall unheeded from his lips every day. It would be a profitable amusement with one, when too ill or too weary to drudge, to take up a word and crack it, and pick the meat out of it, as the children do with their Christmas shellbarks. Here is one suggested by the "Lullaby" sung so sweetly by Miss Carey.

There was a legend among the Hebrews that Adam had a wife before Eve, whose offspring were all devils. Her personal peculiarity was her wonderful hair. Her name was Lilith. The popular superstition, according to the Rabbinical accounts, was that a spectre—this same Lilith—had the power to kill little children who were not protected by amulets or charms. It is asserted by competent authority that the Christians learned from the Jews about this malignant spectre, and that nurses were accustomed to sing to sleeping children, *Lila, abi, abi*—Lilli, away, away—and that from this usage comes our word "lullaby."

AT THE GATE.

Outside the open gate a spirit stood.
One called: "Come in." Then he: "Ah, if I could!
For there within 'tis light and glorious,
But here all cold and darkness dwell with us."
"Then," said the other, "come. The gate is wide."
But he: "I wait two angels who must guide,
I cannot come unto Thee without these;
Repentance first, and Faith Thy face that sees.
I weep and call: they do not hear my voice;
I never shall within the gate rejoice."
"O heart unwise!" the voice did answer him,
"I reign o'er all the hosts of seraphim.
Are not these angels also in my hand?
If they come not to thee 'tis my command.
The darkness coils thee, tumult vexes thee;
Are angels more than I? Come in, to me."
Then in the dark and restlessness and woe
That spirit rose and through the gate did go.
Trembling because no angel walked before,
Yet by the voice drawn onward evermore.
So came he weeping where the glory shone,
And fell down crying, "Lord, I come alone."
"And it was thee I called," the voice replied;
"Be welcome." Then Love rose, a mighty tide
That swept all else away. Speech found no place,
But silence rapt, gazed up unto that face;
Nor saw two angels from the radiance glide,
And take their place forever at his side.

G. E. MEREDITH.

THE MYSTERY OF TRENDLEDEEP MANOR.

BY PERCY B. ST. JOHN.

CHAPTER XIV.

MARRIED LIFE.

If any stranger, or even friend, could have said to Lucy Merton, now Treherne, that she was not happy with her young and thoughtful, but apparently open-hearted husband, she would have been very angry even at the suggestion. But it was undoubtedly a fact which she could not conceal from herself.

Lucy was a keen and sharp observer, and after the first flush of that mysterious joy which appertains to the honeymoon was over, and she could look her cousin-husband a little more calmly in the face, she felt a great and sickening dread come over soul.

Hubert Treherne Mordaunt was weighed down by some fatal mystery.

Now, right or wrong, the theory of the newly-married little woman was, that a man should have no secret from his wife, any more than a wife should have any from her husband.

It did not strike her that the very silence she kept upon this point was in itself a painful mystery.

One word on her part, one candid effort at explanation, and our narrative had never been written.

When the young man intimated that it was absolutely necessary to return to Trendledeep, and gave no reason, Lucy acquiesced without a murmur, though secretly much moved and much annoyed.

Hubert gave no explanation, entered into no details, and Lucy joining without difficulty in everything in the way of preparation, they were soon on their way home.

Now the child of mystery and sorrow, for such in the beginning had been Lucy Merton, began to allow the strangest ideas to trouble her active little brain. Hubert was already weary of her, and was hurrying home to hide from the outward world his weariness and his disgust.

Lucy herself was not a woman to deal in half measures; what entered her head was apt to stay there, and the fatal theory once broached gained ground every day.

It is well to say to husband and wives, as to brothers and sisters, love ye one another; but it is equally important to urge that where there is perfect love there should be perfect confidence; and that neither from any motive, however grave, should keep a secret from the other.

On their return to the manor-house they were accompanied by Dicky Dart and Jenny, who, though thrown so much into one another's society, were not the best of friends. They, too, had their secrets and reticences.

One thing was certain, Hubert Treherne, now, by the royal permission, Mordaunt, never interfered with Lucy's prerogative as undoubted heiress of the house. He left the whole and sole direction of money matters to her; and though advising, and counselling, and influencing her, always behaved so as to let every one see that she was the real mistress of the estate.

This of itself preyed upon the young wife's spirits. In marrying Hubert she gave up all claim to the pecuniary command, and only nominally retained it, in accordance with her grandmother's express wishes and commands.

The return to Trendledeep was not made without a grand manifestation on the part of the tenants, who gave the young married couple a warm reception, which was seconded by the servants.

Even Mrs. Church, now that the dame was dead, yielded the most implicit authority to Lucy; who in her unsophisticated eyes absorbed all, and succeeded to all, the old lady's potency and power. At all events, she was a true Mordaunt, and not, like Hubert, one who had taken the name by royal letters patent.

As soon as they were installed in the manor-house, Lucy became tolerably absorbed in the cares of an extensive household, which her grandmother had taught her personally to overlook; while Hubert from the first day began a series of absences, which, never alluded to or explained, became deep sources of regret and reproach to Lucy.

She never murmured, never repined, made no personal allusions to her source of grief; but she allowed all kinds of wild and strange suppositions to eat like a canker to her very heart.

Hubert would rise early and scour the country half the day, returning at dinner-time both weary and thoughtful, though never alluding to the subject-matter of his thoughts and cogitations.

By degrees, however, this passed away; and the young husband became himself again, regained all his animal spirits, devoted himself to all the old amusements and usual style of life of a country gentleman, and to all appearance was happy and contented.

Lucy was not quite satisfied. There was, she felt, a drawback somewhere; but as she could not trace it out, and he seemed to wish it ignored and forgotten, she resolved to bow to destiny, and be as happy as possible. But when a woman believes that there is some secret reason why she should not be happy, it is very difficult for her to be so.

Lucy had everything that the world could point out as the means of enjoyment. She was rich, at the head of an extensive establishment; she had her town and her country house, a young and handsome husband. No one could be more kind, affectionate and generous than Hubert—there lay the very sting. He had married her to please his aunt, and was now trying with all his heart and soul to appear to have done so from love. So true is it that if genuine, naked cause of grief does not exist, we can make it for ourselves.

Men are less keen and sharp in matters of the heart than women, and Hubert never appeared to entertain the slightest idea that Lucy was not happy. She had every reason to be so; all her neighbors either loved or envied her, while he was considered really and truly a happy man by their numerous visitors.

And they were very numerous, as at Trendledeep manor-house English hospitality was dispensed in the good old style, to the great satisfaction of the county.

Several guests were staying at the manor-house—county neighbours, who came for a day or two, but who were people not usually neglected or left alone. Lucy devoted herself heartily to the ladies, while Hubert did the same for the gentlemen.

One morning, with only a hasty assurance that he was called away, Hubert Mordaunt rode off, leaving the guests to the sole care of Lucy.

There had been some idea of a picnic—of a journey to some more than ordinarily pleasant spot in the neighborhood—and Hubert was to be leader and guide; and now he was gone, even without hint why or wherefore, and without fixing any date for his return.

No one save Lucy thought anything about the matter. In the better classes of society men are so often called away from home by business which they do not trouble their wives with, that his absence was considered quite a matter of course.

The expedition to the ruins was not, therefore, deferred; and even Lucy was as happy as she ever could be in the absence of her lord and master.

They returned early, dined, and spent the evening in the usual amusements.

Lucy being evidently tired, the ladies beat an early retreat, leaving the gentlemen to follow or to go to the smoking-room just as they thought proper.

Lucy, having seen all her female friends to their chambers, retired to her own with Jenny. She very soon dispensed with her maid's services, and took up her old post of observation at the window, watching, with weary longing, like many another woman has done, for her husband's return.

He came home about midnight, dashed up to the door on horseback, stayed quite half an hour down stairs, and when he entered her chamber, was both surprised and vexed to see her up, and watching. He was evidently fatigued, and much put out.

"I wish, Lucy, you would not begin to contract a very bad habit—that of sitting up for me when I am away," he said, in a slightly irritated tone. "When I found that all the ladies had retired, I took my supper—for I was hungry and tired—quite hoping to find you asleep when I came up."

"I have always awaited you," replied Lucy, whose heart began to swell strangely in her bosom. "It seems so strange now to retire alone."

"Once for all, Lucy, you must have more regard to your health and spirits than to cultivate these late hours in the country. If I am called away, as I may often be, unexpectedly, do not wait for me. It would only make me miserable, and do no good."

He offered no further explanation—not even the faintest hint of the cause of his absence.

Lucy's blood ran cold, and her heart seemed to stand still. She had waited up, with what sweet hope of confidence she only knew, to tell and to be told, and this was the end.

Hubert was not absent again for long. During that visit, and for some weeks, there were abrupt and unexplained departures, in which at times Dick Dart partook; but about which to her no explanation was vouchsafed.

CHAPTER XV.

A DARK REVELATION.

The fixed idea that possessed the unfortunate Lucy was one of a most dangerous and delusive character. Her husband was either tired of her, or had never loved her; and so contrived these constant absences that the truth, which were they constantly together could not be concealed, might not be made known to her in a harsh or unpleasant manner.

True, when at home, whether before company or in the privacy of their chambers, Hubert was all that could be desired; but such is the terrible ingenuity with which women in matters of love torment themselves, that Lucy accepted all this as mere sacrifices at the altar of duty. Even as the mariner clings to the naked rock, from which he must ultimately be swept, so did she grasp what she thought was the shadow, after the substance had, she believed, departed.

And then again, for more than one reason, she strove and struggled against her own wild notions with an energy born of a sense of right and justice. If Hubert never had loved her, and had only married her to please her grandmother, or to protect her against evil, he was manfully striving to conceal the amount of the sacrifice he was making, and therefore should not be blamed by her.

Still, in spite of all her good sense, despite the whisperings of her better judgment, there swept across her soul at times a double and horrid suspicion—one that sent the life-blood in icy floods back to her heart, and tore from her the one last link that bound her to life and happiness.

He had married her for her money!

Poor Lucy! this was agony, indeed; and when the cruel thought assailed her, what she suffered it is impossible for human pen, for poor language, or pencil to paint.

Her agony was redoubled when the idea crossed her mind that these absences could only be explained in one way—in visits to the truly beloved.

If he had married her solely for her money, doubtless there was some one else in the background upon whom he poured the rich treasures of his affection.

Here it was that Lucy was to blame. She never spoke, but, like the forlorn damsel who never told her love, allowed the canker-worm of suspicion to eat into her very bosom.

Poor Hubert!—whose one thought was to spare her the slightest uneasiness, the faintest touch of pain—how fatally, how fearfully art thou judged.

Under no circumstances, we repeat, should there be want of confidence between husband and wife. There is no secret, however terrible, which is not best told; and few men have regretted—even when the secret was a painful or even a shameful one—making their wives, as it were, their father confessor.

A wrong avowed and regretted is half expiated in a woman's eyes.

But Lucy never entered on the road of explanation. She was too certain of her own misery to have the faintest doubt, and she strove, with a courage that was foolish and even wicked, to combat the sorrow that had its origin in her own fertile brain.

Hubert, like most of his class, had a morning-room, where he gave audience to such persons as wanted to see him—grooms, keepers, the humbler class of visitors, and such like—and where women scarcely ever ventured.

Lucy had been there, and always welcomed, even if Hubert were engaged; but she had fallen out of the custom, and rarely went to the door.

Hubert since his wanderings was perhaps oftener closeted there than ever, sometimes with strange men, whom the servants did not know, and who were admitted to him secretly, and sent away the same.

One person was always welcome there, and that was Dick Dart, who, when he did not accompany his master in his wanderings, went away alone.

Now it happened one morning that Lucy, having been out in the garden cutting some choice flowers for a dinner-party, passed that way, and lingered a moment at the door, as if half-inclined to knock and enter. She stood still, hesitating a moment, and then became aware that the door was already ajar.

Her husband's voice then reached her. He was speaking in a quick, sharp, anxious way that was new to her.

"One thing is positive, she must be saved from all sorrow. There is enough and to spare in the world without calling it down unnecessarily on her innocent head. Heaven forgive me for my selfish reservations and deceit."

"You can trust me, sir," replied the harsh but earnest voice of the strange groom.

Lucy moved away shocked and terrified. The words had fallen upon her like molten lead. The whole sentence was bad enough; but the last—

"Heaven forgive me my selfish reservations and deceit."

Here was a revelation—and the domestic whom he had dragged from the mire made his confidant. It was more than a woman could bear, she thought. She must speak, she could endure this silent agony no longer. She would speak, she would have a positive explanation, and know the full measure of her misery at once.

Foolish, hesitating Lucy, why not have spoken, why not have appealed to Hubert, who sadly enough, it is true, would have told the terrible, the fearful truth?

But pride came to the relief of Lucy, and when Hubert joined her, a little vexed—and his handsome face with a gloomy shade upon it—she made no remark.

They exchanged a few words of no particular significance, and then separated, to meet only at a formal dinner-party, at which Lucy was radiant, and struck every one by her sprightliness and vivacity.

Hubert was rather surprised, and even a little displeased, to see his wife so rapidly play a part which was unusual to her. Next instant a cloud crossed his brow, and when he joined the ladies after dinner he contrived to whisper to Lucy an instant apart.

"You are a little feverish. I noticed it all dinner time," he said. "Shall I excuse you to our guests?"

"By no means," she replied, in a tone of surprise and vexation. "Because I was in unusual spirits to-day must I be feverish?"

"Unusual spirits," he cried, a little sadly. "May I ask, Lucy, what has occasioned them?"

"I really do not know. There are secrets which none of us can fathom, Hubert, and it is best to shun them."

And without further explanation she joined a neighboring group.

"Secrets which none of us can fathom," he murmured, as she turned away; "pray Heaven you may never fathom mine! It would deal a fatal blow, I fear me, to your ease of mind and happiness. But courage; I yield too much to fear, and shall betray myself.

Lucy was in agonies while speaking thus to her husband. Unfortunately, men are not so quick-sighted in affairs of the heart as women; and Hubert, instead of ascribing his wife's manner to cares of mind, was certain that her ailment was physical, and capable of explanation and cure. He watched her, therefore, with a curious eye and was glad to see that by degrees she grew calmer; and when she retired for the night was very much in her usual spirits.

He remained in conversation with the gentlemen staying in the house until rather a late hour, adjourning to the stately old refectory, which, for modern usages, had been transferred into a smoking-room and card-playing *sanctum*.

Hubert seldom broke into the night; but on this occasion a fourth at whist was wanted, and he cut in for a short time—not, however, making it very late, as though he controlled not others on this point, he did himself.

When he joined Lucy she was asleep. Never had she looked more beautiful, as she lay in a calm and placid slumber; that, however, had not been obtained without a struggle, for a tear hung on her eyelashes.

"What can the darling have wept about?" he murmured; "I must ask her. Heaven grant that she have no secrets from me!"

The next day he had forgotten his resolve, the more readily that Lucy was up and out before he awoke, and contrived to avoid any private conference with him before breakfast.

Then came letters—one of the chief excitements of a country house—and there were several for Hubert.

One made him start, and glance with a heightened color and scared mien toward Lucy, who avoided his glance.

She had seen his quick look, however, and had noticed that he concealed the letter which he had received.

About an hour later, he caught Lucy almost alone, giving some orders to Mrs. Church.

"Lucy," he said, with something like hesitation, "I am again called away on business, and may be detained. If I do not return to-night do not be uneasy."

"I shall be uneasy, of course," she replied, a little sharply; "but, of course, I must submit."

"You speak strangely, Lucy," he continued, lingering near her.

"Not more than you act," she cried, as Mrs. Church discreetly moved away.

"Do you think so?" he said in a musing way, "well, perhaps I do. There may be reasons for it, however, which you cannot understand."

"Because I am not tried. I have no secrets—why have you?" she asked, passionately.

"Secrets! Do you think I have secrets?" he continued, very sadly and sorrowfully. "Well, well, perhaps I have. But if you wish it you shall know all; it was neither just nor honest, I dare say, to wed you without telling the truth. But be satisfied; on my return to-morrow you shall know all; even, Lucy, my darling if it separates us forever."

And overcome by strange emotions he turned away, and shortly after left the house.

Lucy retired to her room, petrified with astonishment and dread. At last she was to know what it was that stood between herself and her husband—she was to learn the secret that was slowly but surely undermining their love and confidence.

A woman's imagination travels faster than any known means of conveying thought, and Lucy rushed immediately to the wild conclusion that Hubert was about to subject her to some humiliating discovery—that she was to hear a confession of his having always loved another: in fact, an avowal that he had married her from purely interested motives.

Unfortunately, Lucy had prepared herself for some such discovery; but though she expected it, she knew full well that the truth would be terrible to bear.

CHAPTER XVI.

IN THE GARDEN.

Mrs. Church, going up into Lucy's room soon after her husband's departure, found her in tears.

"What can I do for you, Mrs. Mordaunt?" she asked. "You are not well?"

There came a fresh burst of tears, and Lucy murmured brokenly something about Hubert not loving her, and having secrets from her.

"The master has secrets!" cried Mrs. Church, wildly. "So you have found that out. Heaven forgive us all! There never was a Treherne married a Mordaunt but ill came of it. Hubert is the best of all, but yet he has his secret."

"He will tell me to-morrow," said Lucy, harshly.

"He shall, or I will for him," continued the woman, in a stern, cold voice. "I told the madame how it would be; but she was obstinate, like them all."

Lucy listened with perfect awe and wonder. Her husband's secret had been known, then, to her grandmother, and was known to Mrs. Church. She now remembered the dislike of Jenny to Mr. Treherne, and her soul was filled with double anguish.

Then there came a solitary consoling thought. Her grandmother knew his secret, and yet asked him to marry her.

She reflected deeply.

"Mrs. Mordaunt loved me," said Lucy, at last, "and surely she could not have wished me ill. If she knew my husband's secret and told me not, it was because it was for the best I should not know it."

"Perhaps so."

And Mrs. Church retired, leaving Lucy alone, to dwell upon what she had heard and resolved on. The night was fine, and she determined to wrap herself up warmly and stroll in the garden, where, at all events, she was free from interruption.

A thick shawl and a large hat were sufficient protection from the dews of night, and so, the moon shining brightly, and a calm, balmy air moving the rose-trees, Lucy went down.

A sheltered path, overgrown by trees, occupied the centre, and here Lucy, who had often strolled there with a manly arm around her, walked up and down, musing deeply on the past and the future.

The girl was at the same time positive and romantic. She believed in no love but the one first and unbroken troth which Hubert had sworn to her, and in which she had until lately believed.

Better, she thought, to believe still than be rudely undeceived. Such was Lucy's theory; but none the less did the shadow fall upon her soul, as she decided in her own mind that Hubert had once loved another—still loved her—having wedded her to please his aunt, and partly, perhaps, from some sudden liking for herself.

However strong-minded a woman may be, however earnestly and seriously she may resolve to bear her cross, in the secret recesses of her own heart such a discovery and such a resolve are fraught with unheard-of misery.

At the moment when Lucy made up her mind that it was so, and she must bear it, the pang was none the less acute; and though she, perhaps, never loved her husband more, never did she feel more utter wretchedness.

"But I will be strong. I will be generous; and, perhaps, he may learn to forget her from whom I have taken him, and really love me."

She stood still with folded arms, under the shade of a heavy-bonghed tree, being concealed by a dark and gloomy shadow.

At this instant she heard footsteps and voices.

"You can't see my lady to-night—you ain't fit," said the earnest, almost menacing, voice of Dick Dart. "Come along with me, and I'll hide you until morning."

"As you will, Master Dick, but you'll pay me for this to-morrow."

It was her husband—she could swear to him—who stood within half-a-dozen yards of her, to all appearance under the influence of liquor.

Dick Dart, with an indignant look, held him tightly by the arm, and led him away in the direction of the ivy-clad tower, or pretended ruin.

This was, then, the disgraceful and fatal secret. He drank, and in his cups was compelled to be absent from her—from all—and Dick Dart, his devoted domestic, knew all about it.

In a dream, walking like a somnambulist, attracted as the bird is by the fatal serpent, Lucy Mordaunt followed in their track.

They entered the house, leaving the door open. Lucy crouched on the bench outside, where she could distinctly see Dick, while his companion had his back to her. Dick placed glasses and a bottle on the table, and then pulled out cards.

"I have no money," said the ghost, as it seemed to her, of the husband of her departed happiness. "The lady was cruel; why did she leave it to the wicked woman with the golden locks?"

"Just because she knew how to take care of it."

"But money is made for men. Never before in the history of the Mordaunt's was everything left to the woman, except Lady Hester, and the girl Lucy with the great cruel eyes and the loud voice. I wanted to tell her before the lady, but the lady was cruel, and said I should have none of her money if I were not quiet, and I was quiet."

The groom smiled grimly.

"What did she do then? Why leave all her money to the girl. But I will play," he said, with a wild, half-intoxicated chuckle, "for it must all be mine—shall be. Dick, when I am rich, when I have the money, and she is not master, we'll have life on the deep; there shall be horses and dogs and rare sport—eh, Dick Dart."

And he drained a bumper of brandy.

Lucy fled, horror-stricken and disgusted. Her noble husband, the refined and elegant Hubert, a grasping miser, who in his mad desire to clutch wealth, in his determination to obtain his aunt's inheritance, had taken to drink. It was horrible, too horrible, and could only be explained by one theory—too much love of gold had driven him mad.

It was a fearful discovery, but it explained much; the scene in the garden on her first arrival, her husband's sudden fits of absence of mind, his hurrying away when the fit came on, and now his coming home, and hiding under the care of Dick Dart in the ruin, where he could give way to his furious passions undetected.

It was a fearful, a horrible discovery; but now that she knew all, what was to be done?

Lucy never knew how she regained her chamber, how she crept into bed, and, strangely enough, slept soundly—indeed, woke not until Mrs. Church brought her her breakfast in bed.

"The master is not come home," she said; "but I daresay he won't be long. I have told them all you are not well."

Lucy looked at her with a strange and inquiring glance.

"Have ever any of the Trehernes been mad?"

"Good heavens!" cried Mrs. Church, in a state of great alarm, "who has been chattering? My poor dear, you are feverish and ill."

"Yes—say so—let none come near me; I must sleep," said Lucy, and clutched her pillow wildly.

An hour later, a well-known step entered the room. Lucy by a powerful effort contrived to feign sleep. He hung over her, saying to Mrs. Church, who still remained—

"She has either discovered something or has been told something. Poor darling! 'Tis a terrible awakening for her. Heaven knows I would have spared her," said Hubert, earnestly and solemnly; "but it was not to be. She sleeps! Heaven shield my innocent lamb from too great suffering because of the curse of our race!"

"A curse indeed, drink and gold," said Mrs. Church, solemnly.

"Silence, on your life! Would you blast her ears with the foul sound? Would that the gold had never been if it be to cause misery. Would that it had been left to me," he added, with a sigh; "it had been better so."

And, stooping, he kissed Lucy and went away, nor did the poor suffering girl see any more of him at that time.

Lucy was stunned with horror. Every word her husband had uttered by her bedside appeared to confirm her worst fears. Nor in her present state did she pause to reason or reflect. Neither would she have any one for a confidant.

After luncheon the fever abated, and Lucy ordered her carriage. Mrs. Church resisted at first, but Lucy was calm and peremptory. A drive would do her good, she said, and the faithful attendant yielded.

Mrs. Mordaunt was absent some hours, and when she returned her guests had all departed. A kind of panic had taken possession of them.

Mrs. Mordaunt was ill, would see no one, drove out mysteriously in a carriage. Doubtless it was some contagious disease.

Lucy smiled when she heard the news, and then went straight to her room.

"I shall be better for a night's rest," she said, later in the evening. "Do not let me be disturbed, even by my husband."

Mrs. Church thought that the rest might be useful, and as she wished it, left her mistress alone.

Lucy did not go to bed for a long time. She sat at a table weeping bitterly. Then she closed her door and windows, shut out every glimpse of day, and prepared for her vast and terrible enterprise.

CHAPTER XVII.

IN THE DARK SHADOWS.

It was about ten o'clock when Hubert Mordaunt entered the house. His mien was decidedly excited, but there was a beam of satisfaction in his expression, which seemed to indicate that he was the bearer of good news.

"Well," he cried, addressing Mrs. Church, "and how is Lucy?"

"I hav'n't seen her. I knocked early, but she bade me not disturb her on any pretence, even if you returned. She wanted rest."

"When was this?"

"Last night."

"And she is not yet up. Come with me; Lucy is either ill, or something is the matter."

With a wildly-beating heart he advanced along the passage, and opened his wife's door.

It was strewn with litters, and the bed was empty.

"Woman, where is she?" he cried, clutching the arm of the terrified housekeeper.

"What is this?" she gasped, showing a letter.

He tore it open with frenzied haste, looked at a few lines, and groaned.

"What can she mean? Merciful heavens! Gone! gone!" he exclaimed.

"Gone, sir!"

"Listen, woman, and if you are sane and I am mad, explain to me as best you may what the darling writes, for I know not."

"Married to a man who in my own hearing has confessed that my money was his attraction—who has taken to drink in preference to abiding by his bargain, I cannot but release him from what is worse than heathen bondage. How I loved him he will never, can never know. I sought not fortune—it was thrust upon me; and freely I resign that which has caused me the crowning misery of my life. Let none seek me—I shall never be found. Of that which is mine I take a part, to carry me where I never can be traced. Farewell! Your wish that the money should have been left to you—spoken over my own bedside—is gratified. Go! sin no more—and learn to forget the past. LUCY."

Within this was enclosed a deed, executed the day before, making over the manor-house and all the property absolutely to Hubert Treherne Mordaunt.

"May Heaven have mercy on me!" cried the young man. "Will you explain this, woman?"

"There is some fatal mistake. Jenny did say that the night before Mrs. Mordaunt was in the garden. What could she have seen?"

"Too much!" groaned Hubert, with agonizing woe depicted on his countenance; "but she shall be found; yes, found—found!"

And as he shrieked these words rather than said them, he fell with a terrible crash upon his wife's bed. When a doctor came he proclaimed him to be in a burning fever, which had attacked the brain, the very fountain and citadel of life.

The tumult in the house was fearful. Mrs. Church, who alone understood what was the matter, could give no other explanation than that Mrs. Mordaunt, who was herself ill, had left the house in a state of delirium, leaving behind her a wild and incoherent letter.

All that could be done was to hunt for the unfortunate lady, whose inexplicable flight had brought her husband to the very verge of death.

Mrs. Church entered into no further explanations, but carefully secured the letter and paper left by her mistress.

Dick Dart appeared the most puzzled of all, and yet the most ardent in pursuit.

But for a long time every effort was useless. Meanwhile, dangerously ill, his head shaved, his room darkened, doing battle hourly with death, lay the master of the house. He occupied an extensive bedroom looking out on the lawn.

His illness endured three weeks before he was able to understand a word, or give utterance to a rational question.

His first words were for Lucy.

"No tidings," was the reply.

And the young man relapsed into a dark and gloomy silence, which quite alarmed his medical attendant.

"Unless something be done," he said, "we shall never make much of Master Hubert Mordaunt. Cannot his wife be traced? His life is wrapped up wholly in her!"

Mrs. Church shook her head, set every engine in motion, even to advertising, and no advantage was derived from it.

Not the remotest trace of Lucy Merton Mordaunt could be found.

Hubert became sullen and melancholy, refusing to see even his intimate friends. The doctor and Mrs. Church grew seriously alarmed, and would have had a nurse in his room.

"There is but one nurse could do me good," he replied, "and she has left me. I would rather be alone. Open the shutters, that I may gaze at the trees."

This soon became his solitary pleasure. That only lasted a few days, when, after Mrs. Church and Jenny thought they heard strange and angry voices in his room, he suddenly had the window and shutters closed again. They little suspected what all this meant.

Then there came to see him one Silas Regan, a smooth-tongued, soft-spoken personage, whom, to the horror of all, Mr. Hubert had sent for to manage his home as steward and adviser.

The very name was enough. Neither Mrs. Church nor Jenny waited to be discharged; they left the house of their own accord.

All the old servants were dismissed, and three months after the flight of Lucy the manor-house was, it appeared, in the hands of a fierce notary, to whom the master was but a tool.

Physically, as well as morally, was Hubert Mordaunt changed—his face gaunter and longer, his eyes more hollow and deep-set, while his hair, as it grew, was thin, and silvered with gray.

All ordinary society was given up, and none ever went to Trendledeep except those invited by Silas Regan, who were mostly rather roguish-looking customers.

There was a cook and butler, and both meat and drink were consumed at the house in abundance; but none but strangers were invited.

The whilom gallant master of the manor of Mordaunt appeared to have degenerated into a mere sot, thinking of nothing but eating, drinking and cards, or any other game in which cunning and *finesse* were required.

But what puzzled people most was that Hubert never left the estate, while all business matters were transacted by Silas Regan.

Mrs. Church, Jenny and Dick Dart removed to London, the latter more grieved and cut up than any of those to whom Hubert had been kind. Mrs. Church and Jenny had money, while Dick had very little.

When he had seen Mrs. Church installed in a comfortable home—a cottage near London—he announced his intention of seeking for Lucy.

"Dick ain't clever; but if he finds her, he won't be long finding Master Hubert."

"Too late! He's gone forever!"

"No, not gone, but changed," said Dick, with a cunning look; and he began his search, which, however, at the end of several years, was no further advanced than ever.

In the meantime, what had become of the rash, impulsive girl, who, without meaning it, had brought upon innocent heads so much fearful suffering?

(To be continued in our next. Commenced in No. 41.)

Ever My Queen.

BY PIERCE EGAN,

AUTHOR OF "THE FLOWER OF THE FLOCK," "VIOLET; OR, THE WONDER OF RINGWOOD CHASE," "MARK JARRETT'S DAISY," ETC.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE DEAD RETURNS TO LIFE.

It was somewhat late the next day when the Marquis of St. Leonards, having given Lister ample time to recover his sobriety, entered the room in which he had caused that worthy to be placed.

"I am your lordship's most humble, most obedient servant to command," he exclaimed, with a low bow.

"You know where you are?" responded the marquis, curtly.

Lister made an inspiration of the air with his lips. He partly turned his face to the landscape seen through the window.

"I dreamed, my lord marquis," he answered, "that I was swimming in a lake of boiling sulphur in the capacious and inflammatory regions of Satan, and I awoke to find myself in Paradise. A 'Paradise Lost' to me, my lord, when I was thrust out of it, another Adam, with a——"

The marquis raised his hand impatiently to interrupt him. Cold as an icicle and stern to rigidity, he did not betray a sign of the emotion which was troubling his breast and mind. He merely regarded Lister with a haughty austerity, and said, coldly—

"Follow me!"

Then he turned, and moving along the corridor, descended a flight of stairs to a room which Lister well remembered. It was one to which the marquis, when Viscount Hastingleigh, was much attached, for in it were stored all the articles—they were many and various—on which he set a secret value, either as tokens of memory, or for some associations which had a special place in his estimation.

On entering it, Lister's eyes raced in familiar recognition round it. It happened to be exactly in the same condition as it was when he last quitted it. Nothing seemed to have been altered in the arrangement—nothing moved from the place it had formerly occupied.

Yes, there was one object, and the marquis immediately drew his attention to it by advancing at once to the spot where it leaned against the wall, and reversing its position.

It was the portrait of a lady, painted with masterly ability. Lister instantly recognized it with an involuntary groan.

"You remember this person?" observed the marquis, slowly and interrogatively.

Lister glanced furtively at his face; no marble was ever whiter, and the features were set as if they had been chiselled out of the same material.

"It would be impossible for me to forget that unhappy young lady, whom I knew as the Viscountess Hastingleigh," he answered, in an undertone, after a momentary silence.

"Is she alive?" demanded the marquis, with a sharp suddenness which made the man start.

"Alive?" he faintly repeated.

"Aye, alive," rejoined the marquis, sternly, and with wonderful self-control. "If any one can answer that question, you are he. The woman Marchmont, your wife, had, I know, a secret on that point.

She would not, after she had apparently terminated all relations with me and my house, have kept that secret from you."

"The woman whom I married as Anne Marchmont, at the suggestion of your lordship, was an individual who never communicated to her left hand what her right hand had been guilty of, if she had a motive to keep silent about it," returned Lister, with an incisive emphasis. "I was her left hand—certainly her left hand, my lord."

"Does she live?" reiterated the marquis, with a slight elevation in his voice.

Again Lister glanced up at him under his eyebrows.

"As well ask of me, my lord marquis, whether the President of the United States is at the present moment enjoying a cigar," he answered, cautiously. "Ask me, if you will, about a child—a beautiful, hapless innocent, and, therefore, most inhumanly-treated child—and I will——"

"Silence!" interrupted the marquis, peremptorily, and with an angry gesture of his hand. "Answer my questions only, and in no way wander from them. When you were living with your wife Marchmont, after you had quitted Hastingleigh Court, as you, as I, believed forever, you must have exchanged and shared mutual confidences. The terrible events of that night—at—at—the Stepping-Stones—could not have failed to be a fruitful subject of conversation between you. The woman Marchmont possesses an important secret in connection with it—I know she does, mark that. What is it?"

Lister rubbed his hands briskly, and seemed to be sipping boiling hot liquid. He shifted his eyes restlessly from the marquis to the beautiful face in the picture and back again, apparently debating in his mind what answer he should give.

"Answer me, man, without equivocation," urged the marquis, fiercely; "answer me, and truthfully. You do not comprehend what a lie may cost you. Was Lady Hastingleigh drowned at the Stepping-Stones on that night in all respects so accursed to me?"

Lister drew himself up to an erect posture, and assuming a deportment which for him was dignified, he answered—

"My lord marquis, my life is as a piece of thread which has been steeped in sulphur, and to which a light has been applied: it is consuming slowly and surely. I, therefore, fear no threat, and cannot be moved by menaces. There is a young, fair girl—a lovely, graceful creature, in a perilous condition—your child, my lord——"

"I will not hear a word respecting her," interrupted the marquis, passionately.

"But you must, if you would have me speak," rejoined Lister, firmly. "You cannot force me to say what I know, but you may bribe me."

"Name your price. I will accede to your terms, however extortionate," returned the marquis, eagerly.

"I do not ask for money," returned Lister, quickly, with a curious loftiness. "Though needy to beggary, I am not so abject a wretch as to continue to help in keeping that sweet young child in a position so wickedly and infamously beneath the one to which she is entitled. I say, my lord, your daughter——"

"Again, man!" interposed the marquis, with extreme anger flashing from his eyes.

Lister threw up his hands violently, and continued, rapidly—

"Again, again, and again—a thousand times again!" he all but shouted. "She is a wronged innocent in extreme peril, with only the conscious rectitude of a pure mind to keep her from falling in the snares of one as well-born as yourself, and as handsome as an Apollo. How poor a safeguard that is, my lord marquis, you cannot fail to remember."

"I repeat I will not hear you," he impetuously rejoined. "I acknowledge no child. If the thing you speak of became a soldier's drudge I should rejoice."

"No, no—not you," rejoined Lister, quickly. "I know your nature, my lord, better. However, I have made a mental vow to do my best to see her restored to her rightful position. Her recognition by you, my lord, is my bribe—her replacement in the noble home from which she was so cruelly discarded will be my fee—her happiness the only reward I shall care to claim. She is an innocent victim—your lordship will, at least, admit that."

The marquis turned from him impatiently, and paced the room with an irritated manner. Lister followed him with a shuffling step.

"Understand me," he pressed, "I do not ask you to bind yourself to a blind bargain; but when I have laid before you one or two facts which may serve to disabuse your mind of some false impressions respecting yonder hapless lady, I shall expect your promise—the promise of a man of honor and a gentleman—that you will give the poor child's case a fair hearing and your profound attention."

The marquis paused abruptly in his walk, and fastened his eyes inquiringly on him.

"Explain yourself, man!" he exclaimed.

"My lord, I approach my subject with a full sense of its delicacy," answered Lister, in a subdued and a respectful tone.

"Speak out and to the point," interposed the marquis, impetuously; "you are only torturing me."

"Briefly, my lord," rejoined Lister, in quicker tones, and with more energy, "your suspicions against the fidelity of my lady were raised by a letter. I shall be able to prove by and by to you, that in the interval between her marriage to you and the day on which she received that letter, she never saw the writer, nor for months previously, and certainly not since that horrible night."

The marquis waved his hand.

"Nothing," he observed, contemptuously.

"Everything," urged Lister, rapidly, "to you—to her—to your child."

The marquis started.

"Oh, everything," continued Lister, rapidly, and with much earnestness. "That letter was a poisoned shaft, sent quivering into your camp through the wicked spite of a malignant woman, who had devoted herself to the avengement of her sister's wrongs; but my soul for it, my lady's good name is as free from actual guilt as unsullied snow. Consequently, her poor innocent—"

"You have not answered the question I put to you," interrupted the marquis, abruptly.

"Repeat it, my lord."

"Was Lady Hastingleigh—really—drowned—on that—night at the Stepping-Stones?" he demanded, forcing out his words with an effort at composure which was only too palpable; "or was I made, between you all, the victim of a juggle, a trick, an artifice, to screen the dishonor of a guilty creature?"

"You were certainly deceived if you believed that the viscountess perished in the Earl's Pool," responded Lister, with a peculiar fluttering of the eyelids. "It is easy to be cheated when we wish to be."

The marquis did not affect to hear the last remark; but it was evident that he was deeply agitated by this confirmation of the suspicions he had so long cherished. After a concealed struggle with his emotions, he subjoined—

"Of course you are prepared to furnish me with evidence that the person of whom we have been speaking lives?"

"I did not risk my life to snatch you from a watery grave unless I was prepared to make your lordship see what a dreadful error you have committed, and how much you have made innocent persons suffer," answered Lister, with an expressive nod of the head.

"Innocent!" repeated the marquis, with a scornful curl of his lip. "At least, I may believe the evidence of my own eyes?"

"By no means—not always," appended Lister, quickly: "legerdemain would be no art if you did. Be convinced by proofs alone, and I will furnish you with unshakable evidence that the Viscountess Hastingleigh was an innocent and maligned lady, and that her dear, sweet child, who has been rescued from actual death to be in danger of a moral death if we do not look sharp, has been the most inhumanly wronged of all parties."

"I will give you the chance," exclaimed the marquis, pressing his temples with his hands. "If I could only be brought to believe—"

"You shall be brought to *know* and that is better than simple belief," rejoined Lister, rubbing his hands with an air of satisfaction. "Only be pleased to order me a meal. I have fasted long, and though I feel like a spirit of vengeance, I have a faintness of stomach which does not agree with energy, perseverance and determination. Once satisfied in the abdominal regions I will ask you to accompany me in the task of hunting up one who knows all the truth, and from whom I can extract it by pressure, as you express the oil from linseed. She shall turn Queen's evidence in more than the one sense."

"You refer to your wife?"

"I do."

"Follow me," ejaculated the marquis, with an air of feverish impatience. "I will not lose an hour in settling this horrible uncertainty—suspense has become insupportable to me."

He quitted the room, and Lister followed him with a shuffling step.

While seated before a repast which the marquis had ordered for him, and then left him to partake of alone, Lister ate and mumbled and nodded his head significantly.

"I will be a teetotaller," he muttered, with his mouth full; "a tee-tee-double-teetotaller, until I have seen that poor little queen of my heart and my memory moving queenlike in these proud halls. Ah! I wonder whether she remembers what I told her when I parted with her long years ago—whether she has ever repeated the name of Lister, and 'Lord hear me, I live in hope—Lord—Lor—"

He suddenly stopped, and his eyes grew to twice their size as an object near to the door caught his vision.

It was the form of a stately yet graceful lady, more like an apparition than a living, breathing creature. The face, though changed, was unquestionably the original of that portrait upon which he had gazed with humid eyes scarce an hour before.

He arose impulsively from his seat, trembling like an aspen. He drew his shaking hands together, and gasped, hoarsely and tremulously—

"My lady—my lady!"

She raised her hand quickly to impose silence, and closed the door noiselessly behind her. Then she glided hastily to him, bent her wan, careworn face to his, and whispered, in a tone of agonized appeal, which thrilled every fibre of his easily-excited nerves—

"My child—my darling! where is she?"

He gasped with open mouth, and could not articulate a word.

"I overheard all that passed in your lord's private chamber above," she pursued, in hurried, scarce audible, accents, "and I dare not stay here a second longer. All I ask of you is to tell me where I can find her—claim her. Oh, I have suffered so much, so deeply. In the name of charity, of mercy, of Heaven, give me the information, I beg of you."

He tried to moisten his parched lips, to force some sounds through his throat, but a spasmodic sound only issued thence.

"She was entrusted to Marchmont—you married her. You are not so unnatural, so relentless as she; you have not the motive," she urged, more passionately than ever; "have pity on me. I am not mad now. I so yearn to press my darling to my heart; be merciful!"

She would have sunk in her frenzy of appeal upon her knees to him, but he arrested her and forced out—

"My lady—my lady marchioness—"

"Hush!" she interrupted, agitatedly; "no name—no title; not yet, not yet."

With the scared look of a hind who knew himself to be face to face with an apparition, with the trembling limbs of one who is suffering under an attack of *delirium tremens*, he thrust his hand into a pocket in the breast of his coat and pulled out a greasy, dilapidated pocket-book. He searched among some faded papers within it, and drew forth one which he offered to her.

"I was forced apart from the dear one when she was but an angel child," he said, with chattering teeth, as if he were shivering with cold, "and I did not see her again for years—a woman grown, a sylph-like creature. We met by chance, but I knew her at a glance, for how could I have passed unremembered a face I had worn in mind, my heart, as the only treasure worth preserving there? I saw her again in a time of fearful danger, and lost her as I thought forever; but no, an all-directing Providence brought me within a few paces of her as she was entering a house attended by a gentleman. I had no opportunity to speak to her, but I made inquiries, and found that the house she entered was the residence of General Cleveland Dysart—"

A scarcely-suppressed hoarse scream burst from the lady's lips.

"No, no!" she exclaimed, in accents of horror, "not there—not there!"

"Yes—there," he responded, with a look of anxiety; "she will be safe there—she must be. The general has a splendid reputation."

The lady clasped her hands.

"Have mercy, Heaven!" she ejaculated, in extreme anguish; "persecute me not so sorely."

She read the address upon the paper with an almost frantic movement of her eyes.

"I must rescue her from him, or all indeed will have ended for me forever," she murmured, in an agonized whisper, and then she turned and glided from the room in the same spirit-like way as that in which she had entered it.

He stood motionless for a minute, until he found that he was alone, and then he clapped his thin, hot hands over his eyes, exclaiming unconsciously aloud—

"It was she—the viscountess! the viscountess! her mother—her poor mother, alive, in her senses, and on the way to rejoin her child. Did I not tell the babe to pray to the Lord to hear her? He has heard, and He will reunite them, for that it was the viscountess herself, living, breathing I'll swear—"

"Who?" cried a voice near to him, with a suddenness which made him leap.

He drew away his hands, and beheld the marquis before him, staring excitedly at him.

"My—a—my wife," he gasped, hardly knowing what he said.

"The woman who this moment left you?" pursued the marquis, eagerly.

He nodded his head in reply, for he was unable to speak.

"She shall not escape me," exclaimed the marquis, between his teeth, "though she were as fleet as a reindeer," and he rushed from the room.

"We are all miserable proposers, and Heaven works its wonders in its own way," muttered Lister, with a bewildered, dazed look, as he followed the direction the marquis had taken.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

CLEVELAND DYSART MAKES A REVELATION.

The will-power—that is the spiritualistic term, we believe, for the strange influence which Cleveland Dysart wielded over Etheline in so extraordinary a manner—was not permitted by him to lose any of its force so long as he remained in her presence. He was but too conscious of the advantage it gave him, and he resolved mercilessly to exercise it.

He had loved her mother when her age with a passion that absorbed every faculty and every consideration. There was nothing he would not have attempted to achieve for her, no sacrifice at which he would have hesitated to make her his. At that period of his life when, dazzled by her supreme loveliness, he threw himself in her path, he had only just obtained his captaincy by purchase, and it had almost exhausted his means. He was not, therefore, able openly to offer himself as a suitor for her hand, her father being, as we have seen, involved, and looking to her disposal to a wealthy husband as the means of relieving him from his pecuniary difficulties; but he lost no opportunity of endeavoring to win her affections.

He was exceedingly handsome, of a somewhat delicate organization, and was endowed with a pair of dark eyes of marvellous color and brilliancy—those eyes of men which most women are instantly attracted by.

At that time he was unconscious of the possession of the faculty of the will-power, and when he concentrated all his energies to induce the Etheline of that day to reciprocate his passion, he thought he was only obeying the urgings of an incontrollable and unmingled love.

The ceaseless promptings of this love compelled him to follow her like her own shadow, to cross her path at every turn, and to suffer no chance of forcing her to see the effect her charms had had upon him up to the very moment when destiny, if it may be so stated, placed them together alone on one occasion, and gave him the coveted opportunity to make an avowal of his attachment.

This he did with a torrent of fervid eloquence, with such earnest, almost piteous pleading, that the young girl at whose feet he knelt, whose hands he clasped—nay clutched—and whose eyes he transfixed with his own, found herself bewildered, dazed, powerless.

Love until that moment had really had no home in her heart: the attention, the flatteries, the homage of a host of admirers had pleased and occasionally flattered her natural vanity, but not one out of the crowd had specially moved her, until she had suddenly beheld the dazzling eyes of Cleveland Dysart fastened upon her. Then a strange, inexplicable thrill went through her frame, which, however, was even more like a sense of dread than it was a feeling that his eyes were the most entrancing she had ever seen.

She knew not the lure which had attracted her to him. She did not suspect—could not, indeed, have imagined—that possessing a superior power of will, he forced her to believe what he wished her to believe; and induced her to confess that his love was returned, when it was only her imagination which had been enthralled.

Overjoyed beyond description at the trembling, half-affrighted admission he had won from her confused brain and quivering lips, he did not permit her any pause to recover herself and examine thoroughly into the state of her heart, but followed her steps constantly, wrote to her in secret, and, alas for her, met her in secret, renewing his vows and his pleadings, giving her no time to think or reflect, to do aught, indeed, but to believe that she loved him with an affection almost equalling in intensity his own.

He knew that his proposition for her hand to her father would be rejected with scorn, and he was plotting to contrive an elopement, although he had not even broached such a project to her, when his regiment was suddenly ordered to the south of Ireland.

Then came a hurried and passionate parting, and he saw her no more until he met her in the Hermit's Dell, as described in the opening chapter, still in secret, but the wife of another.

On that last occasion he had fallen by the bullet from the pistol of the Marquis of St. Leonards, then Viscount Hastingleigh, but he had been only stunned by a graze on his temple, and when he came to his senses he saw the prone form of the viscount lying on the grass, with a flood of moonlight playing on it, and making it a ghastly object in that lonely, silent spot.

He fled from the spot, rejoined his regiment, then on the eve of embarkation for India, and left the kingdom in the full belief that he had avenged the loss of Etheline by taking the life of her husband.

It was not for some years that he discovered that his bullet had not inflicted a fatal wound; but when he did it awakened all his slumbering memories, and aroused what he found to have been an inextinguishable hate. He discovered, too, that his love for Etheline had come back to him with a force which amazed and agonized him, and the conviction that, although he had heard she had perished on that fatal night, she was, in memory, at least, as dear to him as ever, gave only additional virulence to the malignant animosity he bore the man who had robbed him of her.

With these feelings he arrived in England, bent upon satiating his unappeased vengeance, but without having arranged any plan in his mind; and so, as destiny willed, encountered the daughter of the woman he had so deeply loved, and who, as he believed, had so cruelly deceived him.

In Etheline the daughter he saw the Etheline he had worshipped. In all respects she appeared identical with the Etheline who had taken captive all his senses when he first beheld her, and forgetting the lapse of time which had wrought many changes in him, he felt on meeting with her now as he had then. It did not occur to him that time would work changes in his Etheline's face and form. He had remembered her as she was on parting from her, young and beautiful; and unconsciously he expected to find her looks unchanged. He saw in the Etheline who was now in his hands the exact counterpart of the object of his adoration, and it is easy to comprehend that at once he transferred to her the love which had never been diminished, or even weakened by time or space.

His successful meeting with the woman who had so long had Etheline under her care, and the lavish use of money, enabled him to extract from her the whole truth; and as he conducted Etheline to the new house he had prepared for her, he knew that she was the only offspring of his first love and of his merciless hate.

It appeared to him that it would be a refinement of revenge to flaunt this child before her father's eyes in high places, and in the circles and society in which he moved—to say to the censorious world, the scandal-mongers, the babblers and chatterers, who are never so happy as when blistering some one's reputation, "Here you behold the beautiful Etheline, only daughter of the Marquis of St. Leonards, discarded by him when a little helpless, motherless child, for such reasons as he perhaps will condescend to give to the world, or I, Cleveland Dysart, will supply for him."

It was equally a gratification of vengeance to be able to compel Etheline to accompany him everywhere in public as his charge, his *protegée*, or whatever the marquis, in his baseless and unworthy suspicion, might to his own exceeding agony imagine.

This, at least, was a preliminary portion of his plan, and he proceeded without any delay to carry it out. It was no part of his design to raise any alarm respecting his object in the mind of Etheline; and whatever his real purpose, he too well understood what was due to her purity of thought and actions to give her any apparent cause for disquiet.

He did not condescend to communicate his intentions to her reputed parent, as at the outset of his negotiations with her he discovered that her proceedings in connection with Etheline had been governed throughout, in the first place, by a spirit of revenge on account of her sister Lydia, whom she looked upon more as the victim of the viscountess than of her betrayer, and in the second by an intense and hungry cupidity.

She was of use, however, in keeping Etheline where she was now placed, and he used her for that purpose. His sister he had more difficulty with, for she was a disappointed woman, out of love with life, and looked upon Cleveland's proceedings as a kind of insanity, which she was forced to humor because dependent on him, and because she fancied she could gain certain ends of her own by not thwarting him at the present.

Etheline—elevated to a position in the household to which she had been unaccustomed, treated with a cold formality by Miss Dysart, with a new and sickening fawning by the woman who had claimed her until her arrival at the new abode as her daughter, but did not now—with a strange kind of silent worship, which oppressed her painfully, by Cleveland Dysart, and with the utmost respect by the servants—felt as if she were in a dream, accompanied by a total suspense of the mental faculties, a sort of inanition, in which, though conscious of everything, she lacked the power to exert any energy or will of her own.

All that she seemed to feel was that she was in the toils of the mysterious man who had brought her hither, that she was helpless, and that events would take their course without her being able to control or guide them, or even to care what shape they took. She was so sick of everything, so weary of even life itself.

For her personal comforts there was a suite of apartments which would have gratified the luxurious tastes of a princess, and a toilet which befitted the acknowledged station of the daughter of a marchioness; her sitting-room was decorated and adorned with attractive pictures, ornaments, and flowers which had been gathered in the morning. There were portfolios of exquisite engravings, a piano and a harp. There were books, too, of the latest publication, and of fashionable reputation—in short, there seemed nothing left unremembered which would serve to amuse and to divert her mind from the reflection, if it should obtrude itself, that with all her charming surroundings she was as much a prisoner as if she were immured in a prison cell, with barred windows and doors, and fettered wrist and ankles.

Her only companion was the woman whom she had for so long been taught to look upon as her parent, feeling, as she used secretly to think with self-chiding, unnaturally, that not only she had not the smallest feeling of affection for her, but actually disliked and despised her. She was her gaoler, her pitiless, keen-eyed, inexorable keeper, who passed every hour with her, slept in the same room with her, and followed her whithersoever she moved. She disrobed her at night, and attired her in the morning, proving herself not only a skilful lady's-maid, but, as far as she could, a lively and chatty companion.

This alteration in her manner, so far from cheering Etheline, only troubled her. Indeed, it was offensive to her, it was so unlike the behavior to which she had been for years painfully accustomed, but she made no reference to it; it seemed to be a portion of the drama in which she was playing a compulsory part, and she felt that no explanation of its remarkable change in her demeanor would interest her.

One morning, as this woman was brushing her beautiful fawn-tinted locks, gleaming with the sheen of satin, she fastened her hard, cold gray eyes on her face. It was in perfect repose, not a feature appeared to be even possessed of animation, and her large, lustrous eyes were fastened upon the blue sky, seen through the window panes, as if they were striving to penetrate its illimitable space, in the hope of seeing a trace of the Heaven beyond, to which she so yearned to transport herself.

"How like her proud mother she grows," she thought. "I begin to feel every day now that I hate her more and more—hate her for her mother's sake—hate her for poor Lyddy's sake; poor Lyddy, whose heart was broken, whose brain was shattered, whose life was sacrificed to the villainy of her noble father. I have gratified some part of my revenge, but the crowning triumph is yet to come. Her mother escaped from the fools in whose keeping I placed her, is circling about somewhere, and will cross me again I feel; I'll destroy her yet—and him, with this exquisite instrument of vengeance."

A glittering brightness issued from her eyes, like rays of light from polished steel, as, pursuing her thoughts, she contemplated the white, immobile features of Etheline.

Presently she said, in a soft, half-playful, half-sneering tone—

"I remember, years ago, when you were a little prattling child, I was engaged on a sunny morning like to this brushing out your hair as I am now, and you were lisping, 'Mamma, mamma! Where is dear mamma?'"

Etheline started as if she had been smitten across the eyes by a lightning flash. She half rose up, grasped the speaker's arm with a tight clutch, and looked eagerly and questioningly in her eyes.

Yet a moment's perusal of the hard orbs, and she released her hold and sank back to her seat with an irrepressible sigh, seeming to relapse again into her cold, apathetic state, save that there came a slight contraction of her brows, which did not relax.

Her companion watched her furtively, and bit her lip with an air of vexation.

"You were always a strange child, Etheline," she remarked, a little snappishly; "there was never much affection in your composition. Although you believed me to be your mamma, for you certainly knew no better, you never displayed any love for me. No, as if in opposition, you seemed to be much fonder of my filthy, drunken husband. You remember him, I suppose?"

Etheline did not answer, and the speaker went on—

"You ought to recollect him, I'm sure. The very last time you saw him he held you close to his drink-crimsoned face, and bade you recollect his ugly features, and to associate it with his name."

"Lister," murmured Lydia, involuntarily.

"Oh, you remember that, do you?" she rejoined, with a sneer. "And I suppose, too, that he told you to live in hope?"

Etheline pressed her hands convulsively together.

"I have lived in hope—I am hopeless now," she ejaculated, wearily.

"Do not be a fool, Etheline," returned the artful woman, quickly. "Hopeless, indeed. Why, look around you, and think what you are likely to be; recollect what you have left, and what you have been. Why, your hopes—that is, any such hopes as you could have formed—are about to be more than realized."

Etheline murmured her dissent.

"I tell you they are," pursued the woman, with a curiously bitter smile. "You have been brought up in humble circumstances, and you are about to become a fine lady, like your proud mamma was. I said your mamma—your own real mamma."

Etheline remained silent still.

"You know," pursued the merciless woman, "you were told the other day that I was not your mamma—you heard it plainly enough, and yet you have never asked me since a word about her. That is a little unnatural, don't you think, Etheline?" Shall I tell you a little of what I know about her?"

Etheline rose from her seat abruptly. With a gesture she put her aside, parted her tresses from her forehead with a swift movement of her hands, and keeping down with difficulty the sobs which seemed as though they would suffocate her, she quitted the chamber and entered the sitting-room, but only to find, by the darting of a death-like thrill through her frame, that it was tenanted by Cleveland Dysart, who was standing there, evidently awaiting her coming.

Anne Marchmont had followed her closely; but as she crossed the threshold he waved her back.

"Etheline has not completed her toilet," she remarked, pointing to the waving fall of tresses, which descended below the waist of the distracted girl.

"Leave us," he cried, sternly and peremptorily. "I will summon you when your presence is again required."

The woman hesitated for a moment as if perplexed; but he repeated his command with such evident anger in his tone that she instinctively obeyed and disappeared, closing the door behind her, but only to crouch down and place her ear to a convenient crevice as closely as she could, that she might hear all that transpired.

She had not done with the Marquis of St. Leonards, even if Cleveland Dysart rewarded her for her co-operation with his plans as liberally as he had promised; and she considered it to be of the greatest importance to the success of her schemes that she should be in possession of all the details of his design.

It happened that Etheline, startled to find him in the apartment when she entered it, had raised her eyes to his, and it seemed that he had the mysterious power to fix them there. She had paused, and stood motionless when she discovered him; and when Anne Marchmont retired he advanced to her, and in his soft, sweet tones, said, as he held out his own—

"Give me your hand, sweet Etheline!"

Impulsively, and as if without the power of control, she at once tendered it to him. He took it without removing his direct gaze upon her dreamy orbs; he gave her cold fingers a gentle pressure, and conducted her to a small settee, adding—

"I pray you be seated. I have much to say to you, and I ask your earnest attention."

Like one in a somnambulistic ecstasy, mechanically, obedient to command, she did as he requested.

A curious, half-melancholy smile passed over his sallow features; but it had a tinge of triumph in it too.

Standing with folded arms before her, he contemplated her passive, even listless, features for a brief space, at first with inward satisfaction, mingled with adoration; but a sudden thought passed through his brain, and with it a change of expression. A little hurriedly, but with a marked emphasis, as if desirous of impressing forcibly upon her mind that she was, if he willed it, completely at his mercy, he said—

"You have discovered, Etheline, ere this, that I possess a strange and mysterious power to influence your actions—one you cannot resist. I have but to will, and you must obey."

He saw a strong shiver run over her frame, and he appended, rapidly and sternly—

"A power, believe me, I will only exercise when it is of the last importance to my interests and the end I have in view. Yet understand that at such moments I shall use it inexorably, and despite your wishes and designs you will find yourself powerless to oppose or withstand it."

Then, resuming that wonderful sweetness of tone which made every nerve and fibre in her system vibrate, he continued—

"Yet, sweet Etheline, I entreat you to believe that I seek only to win a free expression of your favor. I desire to create within your breast an attachment which shall have no origin in an occult influence, but shall be raised by your own favorable estimation of the qualities I possess, and which it shall be my study henceforth to enable you to read and appreciate. I design to woo you as it seems to me I wooed you in an earlier time. I would have you evince your tender sympathy—your love, Etheline, in frank candor—as it seems you gave it to me in an earlier time. Do you understand me?"

She did not reply. She only raised her eyes to his in a dreamy abstraction.

"You hear me, and you comprehend me, I know," he proceeded, with a smile which had a singular fascination in it; "but, that you may freely express your unbiassed sentiments, I will disenthrall you—thus!"

He made a series of movements with his hands stretched toward her. Almost immediately she pressed her fingers upon her eyes, her temples, rose to her feet, and gazed around her like one fresh awakened from a dreamless slumber.

As her gaze fell once more upon him, standing motionless, with downcast eyes, she felt as if she must shriek for help, and she retreated toward the door with rapid footsteps. He, however, intercepted her, and in decided tones exclaimed—

"Stay, Etheline; you must hear me. I have restored to you the power of thought and of volition. Do me the common justice to listen to me patiently and attentively. Recall to your mind that I can clear up the mystery which enshrouds you—no one more fully or more explicitly. I pray you to resume your seat, and to remember that, being a gentleman by birth and position, I am not capable of forgetting the honorable sentiments and conduct which pertain to both."

He took her hand once more, and led her back to her seat. She went passively, too, for she felt that there was no one to whom she could appeal for help, and no place to which, if she succeeded in forcing her way from the room, or even from the house, she could fly for refuge.

As she sank back on the couch, he said, with a peculiar stress on his words—

"Is there not one question you wish to put to me—one which is burning to escape your lips?"

She compressed her hands together as they rested on her knee, but she did not speak.

"I told you, on quitting the squalid home from which I rescued you, that the woman you were residing with was not your mother," he continued. "Shall I not tell you of her? Are you not eager to know? You cannot remember her, yet, though you have been, as it were, a discarded outcast, do you not yearn to be told her history? What, silent still? No matter. If you be apathetic on a subject I should have thought of intense interest to you, it is a part of the achievement to which I have devoted myself that you should know all. Give me your rapt attention."

He gazed at her under his eyelashes, and he saw her look as if she were changing into ice.

"What, you freeze, and fear to hear," he resumed; "but you must know all, or I lose a part of what is due to me greater than I can spare. Your mother, at your age, was beautiful as you are, high-born as you are, possessed of feelings, powers, passions, as you are—gave her heart—as you may—to me. She was bartered for gold, and I, loving her with a passion which has no parallel, having the burning tokens of her love for me on my lips, was flung aside, discarded, my heart mercilessly trampled on—broken—crushed! Well, the triumph was but short-lived. After she was married—when you were a little, tottering, crawling child—she met me in secret. Your high, puissant father, proud to a mania of his honor, discovered us. Your mother fled in shame and terror, and perished in the waters of a deep pool; your father——" He waved his hand with a frenzied air. "Well, we have yet to settle our difference. From that hour I have worn the image of your mother as I knew her in my heart a queen—my queen—ever my queen, for she is renewed in you, and I will make you mine—mine to have, to hold for ever—irrevocably mine; and you shall learn to love me, to hang upon my shoulders, listen fondly to my accents, and to repeat those caresses which the Etheline I knew lavished upon me with an ardor such only as a nature such as hers—yours—can know. Tell me what you think of the story, and the picture of the future."

She sat motionless as a statue. He moved to her and placed his hand upon her shoulder. She drooped gently back to the cushion of the lounge, and a cold smile moved his lips.

"She has heard," he muttered, "and she knows her destiny."

He proceeded to a bell and rang it sharply. The door opened instantly, and Anne Marchmont entered the room.

He pointed to Etheline.

"Look to her," he said, as he quitted the room. "She has fainted."

(To be continued in our next. Commenced in No. 6.)

Hallucinations.

It is not generally known that it is possible to *cultivate* the state of mind called hallucination. One of the most remarkable instances was that of the wonderful poet painter, William Blake. The account of his method of portrait painting which we give is as follows: "When a model was presented, I looked at it attentively for half an hour, sketching occasionally on the canvas. I had no need of a longer sitting. I put aside the drawing, and passed to that of another person. When I wished to continue the first portrait, I took the subject of it into my mind: I put him in the chair, where I perceived him as distinctly as if he had been there in reality—I may even add with form and color more defined than in the original. I contemplated from time to time the imaginary figure. I suspended my work to examine the pose; every time I cast my eye on the chair, I saw the man." In one year, he stated, that he had thus painted three hundred portraits, great and small. But the sad sequence of all this overstraining the imagination was that he lost, by degrees, his power to distinguish between his real and his imaginary sitters. His mind became disordered, and he passed thirty years in a lunatic asylum.

The celebrated actor, Talma, used by an effort of his will to make his large and brilliant audience disappear, and fill their places with skeletons. And the thought that he was playing to this ghastly crew is reckoned to have imparted a strange weird power to his personations. Sir Thomas Browne, Jerome Cardan, and Goethe are said to have possessed, in different degrees, this remarkable faculty—a gift scarcely to be desired, one would think.

☞ What will he do with it? A lady who loved Bulwer entered a book shop in the country just as one of the men had killed a large rat. "I wish to see 'What will He do with It,'" said she to a boy behind the counter. "Well," said the boy, "if you'll step to the window, you will probably see him sling it into the back garden."

☞ Des Moines, Iowa, furnishes an Enoch Arden case reversed. George E. Henderson, who left home in 1867, and had not since been heard from, returned, the other day, with an Indian wife, who, though devoted to him, acknowledged the prior claim of his white wife, and has surrendered him in full to her.

☞ I remember a rather diverting incident that happened when I was returning from India. "How's her head?" said the skipper, as he reached the top of the companion, to the man at the wheel. "Tank you, sar," said the black servant of an old Indian lady, who followed him, "a little better to-day." The skipper was too full of indignation and contempt to reprove him.

☞ A Pittsburg man had his head shaved because he had rashly promised his wife that he would not drink another drop so long as he had a hair on his head.

THE MAJOR'S WIFE'S STORY.

BY M. A. H.

"Come girls, as it is yet too early to dress, and you feel refreshed from your siestas, suppose we take our chairs out on the gallery, and beguile away an hour or two. I have an adventure to relate which the extreme warmth of this afternoon recalls with vivid distinctness to my memory. Now give me the camp-chair and group yourselves around me. Take pretty attitudes, for grace should always combine with beauty. Look, too, as indolent as you please, for it is precisely a languid, dreamy sort of story, this of mine.

"Wave your fans a trifle. I am about to transport you into Africa, for the regiment to which my husband belonged was encamped there at a small outpost.

"Well, to commence my story. I was in the habit of taking long walks, though never going out of sight of the camps; but one day I lengthened my evening's stroll. The woods looked so invitingly cool after the burning glare of the last few days; for it was shortly before this that the simoom had swept across the desert, the effects of which had been severely felt by all living things in the vicinity. Now, my husband had repeatedly cautioned me about the hideous reptiles and venomous insects that infest the woods, particularly after the simoom, as he said they were then more numerous and dangerous. He used also to tell me marvellous stories of their size and strength; but I would smile incredulously, and tell him I did not want to hear of a bigger humbug than he.

"Wooed by the alluring beauty of the cool green shade, I was tempted further on, and without wishing to digress, I might tell you of some localities in these hot countries where vegetable life is something wonderful. Doubtless you will not believe me, Lou, with your big brown incredulous eyes, when I tell you of trees growing there with leaves so broad that two of them would entirely cover the roof of a small house. How often I wished we had such trees at home; but I was careful never to sit beneath the shade of one of them, for you knew not but that some monster in the shape of a boa constrictor or something else as dreadful might be lurking behind one of those huge screens. As I was saying I strolled on further than I intended, when to my astonishment I came upon a small hut, as it is called. I do dislike this word, for it conveys to me the idea of something filthy and mean; but could you have seen this tiny habitation, you would have thought the contrary; so neat and clean did it look. I felt thirsty, and determining to ask its inmates for a draught of cool water, approached the only visible entrance, it being open, and paused upon its threshold. The sight that met my gaze transfixed me to the spot.

"A table stood in the centre of the apartment, and seated beside this was one of the most beautiful women I ever looked upon—so lovely, I wondered if she was but the personification of some bewildering dream. She sat with one elbow resting upon the table, her head reclining on her hand. Just opposite to her a boy apparently about twelve or thirteen years of age, sat with his back to the table busily engaged in whittling a piece of wood, forming it into what I supposed to be a flute or flageolet, from the shape of some of the pieces scattered on the floor at his feet. He was so intently occupied however, that he did not observe my intrusion. The woman neither stirred nor spoke. Her face was slightly turned from me, and I observed her eyes wore a frightened, agonized expression which puzzled me. I stood gazing at her for some time admiring her beauty, and remarking the strange peculiarity of her attire, which was of some soft white material; but the arm which rested upon her lap, and part of her bosom was covered with what appeared to be a singular coarse heavy black lace, and struck me as being very fantastically disposed.

"As I gazed, spell-bound—I had not spoken, I could not—I caught a strange, dull, opaque glimmering of something at the opposite side of the table fronting me. Compelling myself, as it were, to advance one or two steps nearer, I was stricken and paralyzed with terror at the most appalling and hideous sight that ever a human being witnessed, for there it was, just upon the edge of the table and creeping toward her—a monster spider. You will scarcely believe me, dears, when I tell you its body alone, independent of its legs, was larger than the palm of my hand, a great bloated thing of a mottled color, and covered with coarse, red hair. It was dragging itself along with a heavy, loathsome motion, and its black claws, legs or talons, or whatever you might call them, were fastened upon the arm and bosom of the poor, frightened woman, and was what I had supposed to be a curious trimming of black lace.

"A subtle aroma clogged the atmosphere, acting as an insidious drug upon the senses, for the woman seemed completely under its deadly influence, and I also felt myself growing numb and heavy, turning as it were into stone, so utterly incapable of all motion and speech had I in a few moments become. Moments, did I say? They seemed as hours. My eyeballs felt as if filled with hot sand, my head as if through it my brain surged, a mass of molten lead. My limbs, heavy and numb, refused to move. But oh! the heart-loathing reality of that which was passing before my sickening sight—that horrible, disgusting scene, the remembrance of which will never fade. Compelled to gaze without the power of moving to call for assistance, a dull stupor pressing down and enveloping me, realizing and sharing all the agony and terror of that unfortunate woman's impending fate, so near and yet so inert to stretch forth a helping hand. I cannot imagine a more terrible ordeal even for the strongest man to suffer.

"The monster's claws were silently and stealthily creeping toward that fair and delicate throat. Oh, heavens! could I have arrested that boy's attention I would have willingly sacrificed my life; but no, there he sat, whistling some familiar air I shudder now to listen to, and so intent upon his work that but for the slight noise he made a death-like silence brooded over us all. In fact, my sense of hearing even became dulled from the intensity of feeling with which I gazed upon the hideous scene, for death in its most loathsome and appalling shape was there.

"Daylight had waned and darkness, like a heavy funereal pall, gradually deepened and closed around us. The heavy atmosphere, thick with a subtle and nauseating odor, oppressed and stifled me, reminding me of some fabled monster of old whose hot, baleful breath first lulled and deadened its victim before destroying. Stealthily the foul creature crept nearer, and ever and anon rolled its glaring and cunning eyes menacingly toward me, seeming to gloat over my distress, so helpless, so impotent had I become. The beseeching despair agonizing that womanly countenance haunts me still. Her beautiful eyes grew stony under the malignant glare of those eyes fastened upon her. This monster—I have no other name for it—unpleasantly reminded me of Victor Hugo's description of the devil-fish in his 'Toilers of the Sea,' though by far more loathsome and disgusting. Now approaching closer and closer, pausing for a second to concentrate and gather strength for the final attack, its skeleton-like claws fairly encircling the round, white, shapely throat, that seemed all the more snowy for the contrast to its noisome covering, it actually rolled once more its crafty, impish eyes toward me as if daring me to the rescue.

"The agony of desperation started great drops of moisture from my brow, and, with a violent effort that seemed to rend through me like a shock of electricity, I uttered a low sob or cry, that sounded in my ears like a crashing peal of thunder.

"The frightened boy leaped to his feet, but simultaneously with my cry, the monster, with a convulsive spring of his whole body, buried his talons into her soft, tender flesh, and she sank back a poisoned, blackened corpse, once so fair and beautiful, when my senses left me, and I sank to the floor in a deathly swoon.

"When I recovered I found myself in my own little cottage, with my husband beside me, who, with many expressions of joy at my recovery, explained, in a few words, the state in which he had discovered me. Opportunely as his presence was for me, it was, alas! too late to save that poor, unfortunate woman. Feeling alarmed at my prolonged absence, and knowing my invariable custom of returning before the unhealthy night dews fell, he summoned one of his comrades, and set out in search of me. Hearing shouts and cries for help, terror quickened their footsteps, and, meeting the youth I have spoken of, who seemed almost frantic with alarm and grief, the tears running down his agitated face, and, with imploring voice and gestures, hurried them to the spot, where this most loathsome and hideous spectacle burst upon their sight. The foul creature had actually pierced a vein in the beautiful throat, and had glutted itself with blood.

"The noise made by the party in entering, caused the monster to turn its now dulled and glazed eyes toward them, and, as if realizing its own danger, made a movement as if to escape; but, bloated and inert, it dragged itself heavily along, and as soon as it was clear of the body of its victim, was furiously dispatched and cut to pieces.

"The woman and boy were the wife and son of Lieutenant Haven, of Company B of the Ninth, a regiment recently arrived. A few days before the lieutenant, with several of his men, had been detailed to carry provisions to a distant post, and his poor wife was buried ere he returned. His grief and distress was too terrible to witness. I cannot speak of it. Sorrowing for the dead is an emotion too sacred to comment upon."

JEAN'S THANKSGIVING.

BY R. E. S.

Cambridge is a quiet little country town, lying in a hollow, around which hills rise and roll away in purple splendor. The purple had turned to brown, however, and dead leaves were lying on all the roads as Jean Rexford walked up from the station, accompanied by Dick, who carried her traps, and tried to tell the home-news in ten minutes. Jean was the oldest of five, a tall, pretty girl of twenty-two, and Dick was fifteen, and anxious to become an engineer on the railroad, although he was destined for the medical profession.

They walked briskly through the keen air, and Mrs. Morse, who lived at the corner, stopped in the act of shaking ginger in her pies, and announced, "I declare, if there ain't that Jean Rexford come home for her holidays, and in black yet, as I live. Now, *I* say it looks as if she wanted to call attention to her loss. I don't believe in girls dressing in black when their beau's dead, and I guess if a likely young fellow came along, Miss Jean wouldn't go and say no to him."

The old lady went on to relate how long she had worn mourning for the lamented Morse, and how often her last bombazine had been turned; all of which is unimportant to the general reader. It would not have troubled Jean very much if she had heard the criticisms passed on her; she might have smiled even, and said, "Black was very fashionable," or "becoming," and she would still have dressed to please herself. She was studying art in New York, and was to be at home only for a week, but the children had laid out plans enough for a month.

Jean had had her romance, like many others; but now it was only a beautiful dream upon which she looked back. She was nineteen when she first met Max Thornton, and they fell in love at first sight. He had just finished his college course, and was spending the long vacation in Cambridge. They saw each other constantly through the summer, and he looked upon her always with the same admiration as the first morning when they played croquet together, and she gave Jack, Max's cousin, a piece of her mind, because he sneered at "old maids." She was utterly unconscious of the impression she had made; and when Max came to the "Cottage" on numerous pretexts, she imagined it was to save the girls the walk.

The Thorntons had been wealthy for generations; the Manor was filled with the gatherings of art loving ancestors, and the Rexfords never dreamed that the heir to an estate grander than it, would ever deign to marry one of them.

The Thorntons had always been kind friends; Jean had gone to school with the girls, and the intimacy had grown with time, till now no day was complete without some part of it having been spent in each other's society.

The summer days flew away with down upon their feet. Max and Jean had many tastes in common; they liked the same books, and he was in the habit of talking to girls as if they had common sense, even when they were pretty and womanly.

He had studied medicine and accepted the position of surgeon on a man-of-war, sailing to China. They were to be away a year, and before they sailed he won Jean's promise to marry him on his return. The Thorntons looked upon him as crazy—a man with an immense income devoting himself to science, and leaving his sweetheart—it might be forever.

The Vulcan sailed away; Max was the only figure on board that Jean saw, and she watched him till dim distance hid each shining sail. Letters came for a time, hopeful and bright, always looking forward to the end; at last silence, and then word came that the Vulcan had taken fire and all on board perished.

There Jean's romance ended; she studied as usual; put on black, and the Thorntons gave her a picture of Max, painted when he was eighteen; under this hung his last carte: a brownar face and earnest look, instead of the boy's careless grace. Their house was quite filled with the curiosities he had sent; wherever you turned some foreign trifle met your eye, and he had been so lovable that even the children talked about him in quiet whispers.

This was the first Thanksgiving since the final news of his loss, and Mrs. Rexford felt a little anxious, not knowing how Jean would bear it. Her daughter was brave, and knew she had to live her life, and her sweet face lightened when she saw the love and thoughtfulness that met her everywhere. After the treasures in her bag had been distributed and she had given her aunt's messages, she listened to the wonderful things that had happened in her absence, and the gossip of the village.

Thursday morning dawned clear and cold; all the hills stood out boldly against the sky, looking like frosted plum cake in their snowy covering; the roads were white, and every tree a study of frost-work. The bell in St. Luke's rang out solemnly; the worshippers passed by two, by three, and Jean found herself soon in the midst of old friends.

The familiar service was gone through with; a short sermon followed, and in the last hymn she heard a voice that sent a thrill through her. She knew that it was only fancy; the tune was one they sang in the olden time, and still the words lingered in her heart,

"Oh, royal land of flowers,
Oh, realm and home of life."

Should she never hear but the echo of that voice, that was now forever still. It was only a dream, no one else heard it, not even his cousins, and she would not turn only to meet the face of a stranger.

The Thorntons surrounded her as she came out, and begged her off for the evening. They knew she could not be spared for dinner, but their claim was a strong one, and part of the day belonged to them, so she and Dick promised to go.

They were met at the door by Katy, who announced that "a gintleman is waitin' for ye; he came after ye'd started for church."

Jean only asked, "Don't you know him, Katy?" and, without waiting for a reply, walked into the parlor as the rest passed up-stairs.

A tall man was standing, with his back toward her, but she knew the figure, and when Max turned she would have fallen, but his strong arms were around her.

"My love, my life, did you not get my letter?"

When she heard the tender voice and looked up in the deep eyes, life came back to her; but she could only lie in his arms and cry.

In a minute the household had gathered about them, and the children danced for joy. Dinner was forgotten till Katy informed Bessie she couldn't tell the turkey from the stove, they were both so black. It was a very happy family that gathered round the table at last and gave thanks for the year's mercies. They lingered long over the walnuts, while Max related part of his adventure.

The Vulcan had gone down, but many were saved by boats and an English vessel, but the first reports said "all lost," and those that followed were not authentic. Max had been taken with a low fever, through exposure, but some Americans who knew him nursed him carefully, and put him as soon as he was able on board a ship starting for England. He wrote from there, but his letter went astray, and the telegram he had sent from New York reached them as they rose from the table. He had come up in the morning train, and finding them away, started for church, but came out before the close, not wanting to create a sensation.

In the afternoon the Thorntons took possession of the "Cottage," Dick having slipped away and spread the glad tidings. They made Jean put on rose-colored ribbons, because Max liked them, and she had to sing all her old songs, for fear she would forget them, as she had never touched her music since the news came. They laughed and talked and cried till they were in danger, Mrs. Thornton said, of losing the little sense they once owned. Max and Jean were allowed to wander where they liked, to act as deliciously foolish as only lovers can; and although they were to be married quietly, Mrs. Thornton threatened a "scrum" wedding to punish her nephew for his scientific explorations.

Talk and Conversation.

Good conversationists are rare; good talkers are common. Many persons who would otherwise excel in conversation, fail through an excessive desire to monopolize the attention of whatever society they may be in. Both Burke and Coleridge belonged to this class. They were continuous talkers. The foremost was very discursive and incessant; but he seldom, if ever, uttered the short, sharp things that made Johnson noted. Every one is familiar with the reply of Lamb to Coleridge when, being asked by the latter whether he had ever heard him preach, answered that he never heard him do anything else.

The art of conversation comprises hearing as well as being heard. You must encourage and stimulate others to talk in response to your talk. We rarely see a party of more than two persons together, without one being guilty of talking too much. Swift's practice in society was a good one; after having spoken, he made a long pause, to give any one so inclined an opportunity to take his turn; but, as a general thing, more than two persons cannot converse well together. A large party can but indulge in talk; to enjoy conversation in its full sense, it is requisite that each person participating should be conversant, to some extent at least, with the tastes of every other. For in mixed assemblies, what would be very agreeable and delightful to one, might be very lonesome to another. Even Johnson (whose talk was considered perfection for that of a man of letters) was not suited to general society; he was too much occupied with literature, and could please only very scholarly minds.

Among the ancients there must have been some very able conversationists; as the principle vehicle for the propagation of knowledge was conversation. Socrates, barefoot and plainly clad, as we see him described by Xenophon, expounding his philosophy and chatting in the shop of the corslet-maker, in the studio of the statuary and at the table, must have been a delightful and brilliant talker. Cæsar's conversation must have been exquisite, for his taste was fine and his knowledge great. Some of his sallies on public occasions show how dextrous he was at *repartee*. The great orator Cicero was also a great wit, and in conversation did not abstain from coarse facetiousness and downright puns.

☞ Susan B. Anthony has been convicted at Canandaigua, New York, for illegal voting and fined $100 and costs. She is determined to appeal, which she has a right to do, but will have her labor and the payment of heavy costs for her pains. The inspectors of the election poll, who received her vote, were fined $25 each and costs.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

☞ A boy defines salt as "the stuff that makes potatoes taste bad when you don't put on any."

☞ When a St. Louis editor wants a delinquent to pay up, he says: "Develop your minerals."

☞ Lydia Murray, who follows the calling of a cab-driver, in London, was fined recently for fast driving.

☞ A hotel-keeper in Toledo, Ohio, has actually sent back by mail to a guest $3, which, he says, was accidentally overcharged in making out his bill.

☞ Inquisitive Freshman to a Senior—"Where do the Faculty get 'sheep-skins' for Seniors to carry off at Commencement?" Senior—"They kill Freshmen." Freshman walks off, meditating on the uncertainty of all human things, and wondering whether he has learned why so many who enter college fail to graduate.

☞ "Child," said a schoolmaster, "who made your vile body?" "Well, sir," said the little girl, "it's not a good one, but isn't it rather hard to call it vile? It was mother made it, and sister made the skirt."

☞ The ghost of Noah Webster came to a spiritual medium in Alabama not long since, and wrote on a slip of paper, "It is tite times." Noah was right, but we are sorry to see he has gone back on his dictionary.

☞ A young man in Peoria sought to secure his sweetheart by strategy, so he took her out for a boat ride, and threatened to jump overboard into the lake if she didn't consent to marry him. But it did not work. She offered to bet him a dollar that he daren't dive in.

"Lame!" sighed Mrs. Partington. "Here I have been sufferin' the bigamies of death for three mortal weeks. First I was seized with a bleedin' phrenology in the hampshire of the brain, which was exceeded by the stoppage of the left ventilator of the heart. This gave me inflammation of the left borax, and now I am sick with the chloroform morbus. There is no blessin' like that of health, particularly when you're ill."

☞ There is said to be a man in New York so thin that he can keep cool at any time by standing in the shade of a lamp-post.

☞ An old lady of much experience thinks that "some grocers ought to hire a music master to teach them the scales correctly."

☞ We are indebted to the Nation for a bit of decidedly curious information. It asserts that the Apaches have adopted, to a considerable extent at least, that particular species of civilized costume known as the "simple dress of an American citizen"—viz., a swallow-tail coat and pantaloons of black cloth, and a stove-pipe hat. It was in this dress, it says, that the Apaches did most of their recent raiding, as it gave a band when seen at a distance on the prairie the appearance of a party of preachers on circuit, and consequently prevented the spread of alarm about cattle and horses.

☞ A society writer in the New York Mail reports that the most stylish young ladies in town have struck against the tyranny of the milliners, and make their own bonnets.

☞ A man in Wayne county, Pa., recently received a check for $1000 from Japan, as a reward for having saved the sender's life fifteen years previously.

☞ The Lowell Courier accuses the young man who set fire to a school-house, of making light of educational privileges.

☞ To dentists—If a Bedouin should lose his teeth, would he talk gum Arabic?

☞ A devotee of Bacchus was overheard the other night thus addressing his hat, which had fallen from his head: "If I pick you up I fall; if I fall you will not pick me up. Then I'll leave you," and he staggered proudly away.

☞ Blogg says he was almost knocked flat the other day by suddenly reflecting that nearly all the pretty girls are but incipient mothers-in-law.

☞ You can use a postage stamp twice. The first time it will cost you three cents, the second time fifty dollars.

☞ The girls employed in the paper-mill at Hampden, Me., after work, one evening, recently, went to the house of a sick man and put five cords of wood into his shed, leaving it neatly piled up.

☞ The masterpiece of Austrian diamond setting at the Vienna Exhibition is a collar of twenty large stones, each set *en solitaire*. It is valued at half a million florins ($250 000).

☞ The Supreme Court of Ohio has rendered a decision in the case arising from the exclusion of the Bible from the common schools of Cincinnati. The Court decides that the School Board had a right to pass a resolution excluding not only the Bible and singing, but religious instruction, and the Court has no authority to interfere with their discretion in the exercise of this power.

☞ A Massachusetts man owns a pair of horses forty years old. He calls them 2:40's.

☞ A Western reporter who has interviewed a dairyman, adds cruelty to the act by heading his article, "A Milkman Pumped."

☞ Is it not about time that Mr. Bret Harte and certain other humorists should learn to confine themselves to proper subjects? Washington, and his reputation for truthfulness, for instance, is not a fit subject for fun. If they would read over Hamlet's advice to the players, they would find a little good counsel, which might be useful to them.

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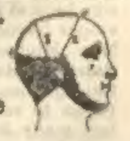

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BY MAX ADELER.

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—We were in at Chubb's the other afternoon, and while we stood at the back window talking, we saw a gray cat climb up a tree in the yard and disappear. Presently another gray cat crept to the foot of the tree and ascended. After awhile a third came sneaking down the yard, and up *it* went. We remarked to Chubb that there must be a general synod or a constitutional convention or something going on in that tree. Just then a fourth cat was seen plunging over the grass, yowling and swishing its tail; and then it proceeded skyward. A moment later a cat tore furiously up the gravel walk, turned three or four somersaults on the grass, emitted a couple of unearthly screeches, and flew up the trunk. This kind of thing continued for some time, and Chubb, who became more and more excited as each additional ascent was made, at last exclaimed, "Merciful Jupiter! but there must be eighteen million cats up that tree. Gimme my gun, and I'll go for 'em!" They gave him his gun and he fired double handfuls of bullets into the tree fifteen times, and not a cat fell. Then we went out to investigate the subject. There were no cats among the branches, or anywhere about the tree. Only at the foot of the trunk, on the other side, we saw Chubb's gray house-cat sitting there licking its paws. Just then the hired-girl came out and said, "Misther Chubb, that cat's been runnin' up one side of the tree an' down the other, the whole afternoon, like mad. There's somethin' the matter with 'm." Yes, it was only one cat that had made all those ascents. Chubb smiled sadly and put up his gun and offered to trade us that cat for a bunch of asparagus and half a pound of cheese, but we refused, and now he is training her to perform in a menagerie.

—We are interested to learn from a journal devoted to manufacturing interests, that "ten million dozen bustles are annually made in this country. This gives just three apiece to each man, woman and child." We have, then, three bustles coming to us, and as we never wear that many at a time, the other two are at the disposal of any man who wants them. Indeed we are not particularly anxious to retain even one, and if anybody knows of a poor creature upon whom the iron hand of ill-fortune is harshly laid, and who, in the midst of bitter and cruel poverty, sits shivering for want of a bustle or two to keep out the pitiless cold, that unhappy child of misfortune can have all three of ours. This kind of generous self-sacrifice, we know, is rare, but it is a characteristic of us. We could not bear to wear three bustles while the soul of a suffering fellow-creature was filled with an intense and hopeless yearning for one. The amount of joy we get out of an adjustable bustle is nothing when compared to the satisfaction we obtain from helping the poor. If we had a bustle as big as a skating rink, we would rather give it to some forlorn and desolate orphan any time than wear it and let the orphan suffer.

—His name was Baumgardner. He was going down to Cape May on the steamboat, and on the way his tooth began to ache in the most frightful manner. Unable to endure the pain any longer, he determined to have the tooth removed summarily. So Baumgardner got a bit of copper wire from the engineer and twisted one end around the tooth; and when the boat stopped at New Castle, he fastened the other end of the wire to the walking-beam of the engine, and waited for the jerk that would remove the tooth. That end of the beam, however, was on the down stroke, and the first thing Mr. Baumgardner knew he was proceeding toward the boiler-room with frightful rapidity. The next instant he was hauled aloft suddenly and flung feet upward into the air. Then he dived down again, then up, then down, bumping against the wood-work, rasping his legs on the rails, scalping himself against the machinery, and plunging about in the most appalling manner, until on a final up-stroke the tooth gave way, and Baumgardner was flung to the summit of the smoke-stack, whence he was rescued by the captain, who was going to thrash him for stopping off the draft. He is said to have remarked to the landlord upon his arrival at Cape May, that while the low pressure steam engine is undoubtedly a useful invention, its application in the practice of the science of dentistry would be calculated to prejudice the public mind against it.

—Before Mintzer joined the Temperance Society, he would sometimes make a beast of himself by getting drunk. One night some of his companions finding him asleep on the sofa of the club house, rubbed his nose with phosphorus for several minutes, and then waked him and took him home. There was a mirror in the hat-rack, and the entry was dark. Mintzer's nose glowed like an aurora borealis. When he caught sight of the reflection in the glass, he remarked that it was a most extraordinary thing that Mrs. Mintzer had left the light burning, and he moved up to the hat-rack to turn off the gas. After fumbling around among the umbrellas and hat pegs for a few moments for the stop-cock, he concluded that the light must proceed from a candle, so he exerted himself to blow it out. The more he puffed the brighter it shone. Then he seized his high hat and tried to jam it down over the candle. At last he became mad and snatching up an umbrella, he resolved to smash that candle if it took him all night. He aimed a terrific blow at it and broke the mirror into vulgar fractions. Aroused by the clatter, Mrs. Mintzer came to the head of the stairs, and observing a phosphorescent light flitting about in the darkness below, she began to scream. But when Mintzer at last made himself known, Mrs. Mintzer girded herself for action. She suddenly slid down the bannisters and seizing Mintzer by the headlight which gleamed from his face, she led him up-stairs firmly but vigorously. Mintzer thinks she must have compressed the organ with a certain degree of force, for when he arrived at the second story the cheery glow on his nose had disappeared. He lets Mrs. Mintzer turn off the gas now, and she always sits up for him when he is out at night.

—The last time we were in California we called upon Mrs. Ripley. She was the wife of a devoted clergyman who had gone to Fiji upon a missionary enterprise several months before. When we arrived we found Mrs. Ripley in mourning and in tears, and she informed us that she had received a day or two before a letter stating that her husband had been killed and eaten by his Sunday-School class. We offered her what consolation we could under such distressing circumstances; we alluded to the fact that all men must die at any rate, and dear Ripley, let us hope, had gone to a better world than this one of sorrow and trouble, and so forth. Mrs. Ripley in reply said, with a voice broken with sobs, "It isn't that; oh, it isn't that. I know he is better off; I'm sure he is happier; but you know what a very particular man he was, and oh, Mr. Adeler! I fear that those brutal savages boiled him with cabbage." There was no use trying to assuage such overwhelming sorrow as that, and we shook hands and left. But it was an odd thought. Ripley with cabbage! We should have thought he would have tasted better with the merest flavor of onion.

—We are staying out in the country this summer at Slaymaker's. Mr. Slaymaker had a hen that wanted to set, while Slaymaker was thoroughly determined that she should not set. The manner in which Slaymaker held that resolute fowl under the pump, and put her under barrels, and tied pieces of tin to her tail was more than amusing; it was instructive; and yet no sooner did the hen have a chance then she made straight for the nest and settled on it. We suggested boiling an egg and putting it under her hot, but although her movements were characterized by remarkable activity when she first touched the egg, she hovered around patiently until it cooled, and then began again. Then we urged Slaymaker to fill a porcelain egg with some highly explosive material and blow the hen off the nest permanently. He did so. That morning Mrs. Slaymaker, who was unaware of the character of the experiment, went out to have a look at the hen. Probably her presence agitated the fowl, for while she stood there gazing at it, the porcelain torpedo exploded with violence and blew the dismembered chicken directly into Mrs. Slaymaker's face. She came pelting into the house with her mouth and eyes and nose full of feathers and white meat and drumsticks and gizzard and straw, and inquiring vociferously for Slaymaker, while she hunted for the poker or the rolling-pin. Perhaps that contusion which appeared over Slaymaker's right eye at supper *may* have been caused by running against the wheelbarrow, as he said it was; but it was just the kind of a bruise that a rolling-pin would be likely to inflict. At any rate, Mrs. Slaymaker manages the poultry department in all its details now.

—We learn that the Episcopal Church in California owes its Bishop twenty-one thousand dollars for arrearages of salary. We sincerely trust they will settle with the Bishop in a different manner from that which was adopted in the case of our old friend Rev. William Slathers, by his congregation. They owed Mr. Slathers two hundred dollars, and asked him if he would like to have it paid up with a "donation party." He agreed, and the party was held. The nett results were fifteen store eggs, eight joints of second-hand stove-pipe, one currycomb, four phosphorescent mackerel, one bundle of clothes-pins, a meat-saw, eleven bed-slats of different lengths, a calico sunbonnet, one slice of cheese, a brown dog, two pounds of cold liver and a bottle of buttermilk. The company stayed until midnight, and they ate all Mrs. Slathers's preserves, kicked the parlor-carpet into rags, broke one of the chairs, and spilled the molasses jug on Slathers's best coat. They do say that the cheese was so lively that it climbed down off of the shelf during the festivities and following its animal instincts crawled back to the store and fitted itself in its old place; but anyhow three of the eggs exploded before the party was over; and the brown dog bit Miss Smith in the leg while she was sitting, full of happiness and bread and preserves, on the stairs, singing "There is rest for the weary." She sued Mr. Slathers next day for keeping a ferocious animal and got one hundred dollars damages from him. Slathers told us confidentially that he wished the congregation had never settled that debt. He said if they paid him much more money in that way he would have to go to the Almshouse permanently.

MORBID SUSCEPTIBILITY.

MISTRESS.—"How is it you came home from your party so early last night, Susan? Didn't you enjoy yourself?"

SUSAN.—"Yes, ma'am. But the young man as took me hin to supper insulted me!"

MISTRESS.—"*Insulted* you, Susan! Why, what did he say?"

SUSAN.—"Yes, ma'am. He asked me if my *program* was full; and I'm sure I never 'ad nothing but a sandwich and a glass of lemonade, so I come away home."

DIAMOND CUT DIAMOND.

BY MARGARET AUDLEY DOUGLASS.

It was a drawn game—instinctively Craige Leighton felt that, as he bowed upon being introduced to Marah Pemberton; perhaps she felt it also, for as her eyes met Leighton's he fancied there was a gleam of amusement in them—such strange eyes they were! While his lips replied to her pleasant words, his brain was puzzling itself over her eyes; their color was peculiar, being neither more nor less than *green*, light and lustrous, but green nevertheless, suggesting the eyes of Beckie Sharp, only more humanized, consequently more beautiful. The whole face was tantalizing, defying all attempts to describe it, neither brunette nor blonde; for, though her hair was golden-brown, her complexion had the deep tints of the darker beauty; her mouth was decidedly large, her nose only passable; yet, despite all this, you were compelled to acknowledge her beautiful, at least Mr. Leighton found it impossible to think otherwise.

Meanwhile Marah had formed her opinion of her companion; he was handsome, decidedly so, of the blonde, lazy type, and perfectly satisfied with self and appearance. Report had called him a modern Achilles, all-powerful in the court of love and invulnerable to the shafts of "the winged god." This she knew, but to herself she added, "The vulnerable place existed, though undiscovered. Why should she not—" The thought lit up the emerald eyes with fun, which woke our hero from the Chateau en Espagne in which he had been dreaming, and where he had beheld in fancy this girl his conquest and himself—but the dancing light in the eyes that met his, aroused him to the realities of the moment.

"Well, have you arrived at any conclusion about my eyes?" she questioned, with a slight smile parting her lips.

Surprised and somewhat startled at this strange question, he returned quickly:

"At the only one possible, that they are wonderfully beautiful!"

"I merely asked, because you seemed undecided. As for your conclusion, I suppose I should disclaim it as flattery; but I am too indolent at present to be proper, so I'll acknowledge it to be true, and confess I am aware of their beauty."

For half a second Craige Leighton was surprised out of his self-possession, and actually stared at the grave face turned toward him. Of course she knew their beauty, but her candor was incomprehensible! Perhaps she divined his thoughts, for her smile deepened. That restored him to himself; and somewhat mortified that this girl had surprised him into silence, he replied coldly:

"You are candid, at least."

"And your tone adds, 'If not modest!'"

"That is your own construction."

"And certainly the right one. You at least are not candid."

"But if one should always express one's thoughts, what an uncomfortable world it would be!" he said with a whimsical smile.

"Do you think so? Then we shall never be friends, for I always say what I think, or nearly always."

"So I observe," he rejoined dryly, adding to himself that the reservation was entirely unnecessary.

"But at least—" Her words were cut short by her partner's appearance, and with a merry good-bye she left the room, leaning on his arm.

Leighton stood alone, lost in thought; there was something about this Marah he could not understand, she had the reputation of being a most finished coquette, and her candor seemed hardly compatible with that character—was it only one of her many roles? There was something in her manner that forbade the idea, so at last he gave it up as insolvable, comforting himself with the thought that he was proof against all wiles, and mentally registering a vow to conquer the conquerer of so many hearts; to teach her a lesson, he said to himself; feeling like a knight selected to avenge the wrongs of his sex.

There must be something in the *dolce far niente* of the seashore that is favorable to flirtation, for certain it is Craige Leighton found that though the season had just begun, Miss Pemberton had at the least some dozen little affairs on hand. He stood aloof and watched her movements for several days, and at their end he had not decided whether or not the young lady flirted; sometimes he was ready to declare she did, but the next minute the red lips would say something so amazingly frank, and evidently unpremeditated, he was tempted to believe himself wrong.

One cloudy morning he strolled into the library where he found Miss Pemberton looking unusually bright and pretty in a white morning dress with a scarlet shawl thrown over her shoulders; near her, leaning against the mantelpiece, in an attitude intended to be gracefully careless, stood Arthur Norton, an irresistible—at least, in his own eyes.

"Ah, Leighton, where have you come from?" he asked as that gentleman entered.

"In the billiard-room where Hall and I have been playing a melancholy game. The country on a rainy day is simply detestable! and to make it worse, the ladies always spirit themselves off in the most remarkable manner, just on the days we need them most!"

"There you are unjust; there is any quantity of them in the parlor, and I am sure I have been in here all the morning."

"In a place where one would never think of looking for you, among old dusty folios, and—"

Mr. Norton here interrupted with a polite disregard for every one else—

"*Au revoir*, Miss Marah; I have an engagement or else I could not tear myself away. Surely, I am in despair that I must leave you!"

"And I, that you must go!" she replied with a laugh.

As Arthur Norton made his exit, Mr. Leighton turned toward Marah feeling righteously indignant; it was impossible for her to be really in despair because of Arthur's going, and yet she said so—such things were right enough for a man to say; but a woman!

"Sit down, my deliverer. Ah, you have no idea what martyrdom I've been suffering for the last hour." Her merry voice broke in upon his reflections, and obeying her command, he pushed a large arm-chair opposite her, and seating himself, began—

"Martyrdom! at least it was voluntary, Miss Marah!"

"Martyrdom is always voluntary; when it ceases to be so it ceases to be martyrdom; for instance, I think Cranmer was a martyr; he had his choice between life and death; but Thomas a'Becket was not, he had no alternative but to die; he was a sacrifice, not a martyr," she said, sententiously, but with a smile curling her lips.

"Very true, but in this case the martyr seemed not only willing but cheerful when I entered. She—"

"Hid her weariness under a mask—*a la* Augusta Evans's heroines!" interrupted the girl, in a mock woe-begone tone.

Mr. Leighton continued calmly—

"She said, with every appearance of sincerity, that she was—"

"In despair, which was the truth; so she was in despair at his leaving, for she knew it was inevitable that he would—*come back!*" Ending she rested her elbow on the table, and shading her eyes with her hand, looked steadily at Leighton, who continued:

"More plausible than—but wait! I think this same martyr is an advocate for candor—at least her own lips said so!"

"And her farewell words to Mr. Norton proved it; they spoke her real opinion on the subject. Their truth lay in what you regard as their insincerity. Had I said I was sorry, it would have been different; but in despair!—he understood it as I intended he should—that I was no more in despair than you are mine, when you sign yourself 'yours truly.'"

"I wish I was!" he hazarded, with a smile at the odd illustration.

"Doubtless, but I was speaking in general terms. You see it is only a conventionality," she replied, composedly.

"A conventionality! Oh, Portia! Portia, thy reasoning is but sophistry after all!" His gravity gave way completely. When he had somewhat regained his breath he said: "But, Portia, what if thy conventionalities prove too much for him? To put it plainly—what if he should fall in love?"

"What! Have you lived thus far in the nineteenth century and not yet found out that people never do that now-a-days? No, sir, don't trouble yourself about his heart, I doubt if he has one."

"But other people have, and if I understand, this 'conventionality' of yours is what other people call flirting!"

"That is exactly like a man! I suppose your next insinuation will be that I am the only person who ever indulges in such a pastime? If a woman does—"

"Flirt," he interposed, grimly.

"Thank you! if she does, I am inclined to think a few gentlemen of my acquaintance are equally guilty. It is perfectly fair—society is like a tournament; one must take care of one's self and ask neither quarter nor mercy!" with a laugh she ended and leaning back, looked saucily at him.

"Well, yes! if you put it that way, perhaps it *is* fair. But, Miss Marah, sometimes one's blows recoils upon one's self—to put it in the form of a proverb; 'moths that venture near the flame burn their wings.'"

"Thank you, I believe I am fire-proof!"

"Ditto! ditto!"

"Then we are quits."

"War to the end, and all honor to the survivor—is that the agreement?"

"Exactly, but I am afraid it is—"

"Diamond cut diamond."

"That is your own conclusion. Is it really three o'clock? I had no idea it was so late, the time passed so quickly. Good-bye, or I shall be late for dinner." A saucy smile and nod of the head, and Leighton was left alone with his thoughts for company.

"Rather complimentary, that last remark! We shall see, my lady, if you are fire-proof after all," he reflected as he closed the door of his room slowly. Marah's reflections were of the same kind; and the consequence of their united cogitations—was a most desperate flirtation, that lasted through all the long golden days; but with autumn, came the time for parting, and in that time they made a mutual discovery, which each guarded carefully from the other. Achilles the Lesser at last discovered a flaw in his invulnerability, and Marah that she was not quite fire-proof—in other words, each had fallen into the snare set for the other, and in so doing had fallen desperately in love.

There was one slight draw-back—Leighton was perfectly sure that he loved her, but he could not help remembering that she was a coquette, and though her manner seemed to imply she was not acting a part, still they had begun by repeating the adage "diamond cut diamond," which boded little good. He determined not to give her a chance to triumph over him, therefore he held his tongue.

With Marah it was the same.

She was standing on the verandah the morning he left. He stood by her side while the rest of his party made their adieus; then when he could delay no longer he held out his hand.

"Good-bye, it has been a pleasant summer to me, and I owe it to you," he said lightly.

"I am equally indebted to you; good-bye and a pleasant journey." The emerald eyes met his, smiling and inscrutable; his heart sank, but his careless, handsome face never changed, and so they parted.

"You are paler than you were last summer, Miss Marah," Leighton said as, after some deliberation, he joined Miss Pemberton. It was almost a year since they had parted, and this, their meeting, took place at a grand reception toward the fag end of the season.

"Am I? You are changed, too: your face is thinner and your eyes have great black circles under"—suddenly the usually self-possessed Miss Pemberton blushed rosered and ended abruptly, her eyes falling beneath his searching look.

"Yes, I *am* changed, and perhaps grown wiser than last summer—for instance, I have learned that one had better abjure edged tools." He paused, but Marah was intent on her roses; after a minute or two he continued: "And that a diamond when it cuts another does not always escape being cut itself. And you, Miss Marah? Have *you* learned nothing?"

Marah made a desperate effort to rally, and presently her wonderful eyes were raised to his face with the old look in them that he knew so well: "Yes, that moths had better beware of candles," she said softly.

"My lesson brought some pain with it—and Marah it is in your power to take it away—will you, dear?"

Marah's face drooped down among her flowers, but presently she raised it, saying:—"If I brought it, it is only honest to take it away—I will atone for my sin if you will tell me how."

"There is only one way, and that is, to take *me* when you lift the pain from my heart," he said with a smile.

"If that is the only way, I suppose I must. Sir, I accept my punishment and your lordship."

"Whom you will no doubt, after a time, declare to be the greatest punishment of all!" he returned, merrily, taking possession of her little white hands. She did not contradict his words. There was a sudden gleam of amusement in her eyes, and the red lips parted enough to show the small, white teeth, as, after a hasty glance around the deserted hall, he bowed his head, and pressed his lips against his betrothed's cheek, repeating, "You are unarmed, fair amazon—your own lips have said it! And now, my captive, you have surrendered without terms!"

"I fold my hands, and cry *peccavi!* I beg for mercy!" she said, her smile changing into a merry laugh at his words.

"I join in crying *peccavi!*" he replied, with a half-smile as the events of the year before flashed across his mind; then added—"As for mercy—I will consider before I decide." But the fervor of his kisses seemed to imply that his decision was already arrived at, and the laughing petition granted.

Milk as a Remedy.

Considerable has been lately said in medical journals concerning the value of milk as a remedial agent in certain diseases. An interesting article upon this subject lately appeared in the London Milk Journal, in which it is stated on the authority of Dr. Benjamin Clarke that in the East Indies warm milk is used to a great extent as a specific for diarrhœa. A pint every four hours will check the most violent diarrhœa, stomach-ache, incipient cholera and dysentery. The milk should never be boiled, but only heated sufficiently to be agreeably warm, not too hot to drink. Milk which has been boiled is unfit for use. This writer gives several instances to show the value of this simple substance in arresting this disease, among which is the following. The writer says, "It has never failed in curing in six or twelve hours, and I have tried it, I should think, fifty times. I have also given it to a dying man who had been subject to dysentery eight months, latterly accompanied by one continual diarrhœa; and it acted on him like a charm. In two days his diarrhœa was gone, in three weeks he became a hale, fat man, and now nothing that may hereafter occur will ever shake his faith in hot milk." A writer also communicates to the Medical Times and Gazette a statement of the value of milk in twenty-six cases of typhoid fever, in every one of which its great value was apparent. It checks diarrhœa, and nourishes and cools the body. People suffering from disease, require food quite as much as those in health, and much more so in certain diseases where there is rapid waste of the system. Frequently all ordinary food in certain diseases is rejected by the stomach, and even loathed by the patient; but nature, ever beneficent, has furnished a food that in all diseases is beneficial—in some directly curative. Such a food is milk. The writer in the journal last quoted, Dr. Alexander Yale, after giving particular observations upon the points above mentioned, viz., its action in checking diarrhœa, its nourishing properties, and its action in cooling the body, says, "We believe that milk nourishes in fever, promotes sleep, wards off delirium, soothes the intestines, and in fine, is the *sine qua non* in typhoid fever." We have also lately tested the value of milk in scarlet fever, and learn that it is now recommended by the medical faculty in all cases of this often very distressing children's disease. Give all the milk the patient will take, even during the period of greatest fever; it keeps up the strength of the patient, acts well upon the stomach, and is every way a blessed thing in this sickness. Parents, remember it, and do not fear to give it if your dear ones are afflicted with this disease.

RECEIPTS.

POTATO CROQUETS.—Boil potatoes with just enough water to cover; when three parts done pour off the water and let them steam to finish cooking; then press them through a wire sieve; this done, put them into a stew-pan, adding one ounce of butter to one quart of potatoes, and the well-beaten yolks of two eggs; mix together thoroughly; then flour the paste board, divide the potato paste into equal parts and roll them on the board to any shape—balls, pears, corks, or what you choose—dip them in egg and bread-crumbs, and fry in hot fat to a light-brown.

POTATO SALAD.—Cut ten or twelve cold boiled potatoes into slices from a quarter to half an inch thick; put into a salad bowl with four tablespoonfuls of the best salad oil, one teaspoonful of minced parsley, and pepper and salt to taste; stir well so that all will be thoroughly mixed. It should be made two or three hours before needed on the table. Anchovies, olives, or any pickles may be added to this salad, as also slices of cold beef, chicken or turkey, if desired.

DRIED-APPLE CAKE.—One cup of dried apples cut fine, (I use a pair of sheers,) soak over night, add one cup of molasses, and boil till it looks clear; cool, and add one cup of sugar, one cup of butter, one egg, one teaspoonful of soda, cinnamon and other spice as desired, stir in flour to make a stiff batter, and bake in a moderate oven. This makes two loaves. Some prefer one cup of sour cream in place of the butter, and I do.

MOLASSES GINGERBREAD.—Two cups of molasses, two cups of sour milk, one cup of cream, one egg, one tablespoonful each of soda and ginger, four cups of flour, and bake in shallow pans in a quick oven. It is nicest eaten warm for tea, but is good for lunch or any time.

To remove egg stains from silver, rub the silver with table salt.

TO WASH FLANNEL.—Never rub soap upon it. Make a suds by dissolving soap in warm water, rinse in warm water. Very hot, and very cold water will shrink woollens. Shake them out before hanging to dry. Wash blankets the same way.

TO WASH MATTING.—Use salt in the water, and wipe dry.

LEMONADE.—Squeeze the lemons early in the day, and add sugar to the juice When needed, add water to the taste.

CHOCOLATE CREAM.—Mix the yolks of six eggs, strained, with 2 oz. of pounded loaf sugar and 3 oz. of grated chocolate, add a pint of milk; set the mixture on the fire in a double saucepan, the outer one filled with hot water, and keep stirring till the cream thickens; dissolve in a little milk ½ oz. of isinglass, previously soaked; add this to the cream, strain it, pour it into a mould, and put it in a cold place or on ice to set.

Answers to Correspondents.

PAY YOUR POSTAGE.—Authors and others often send us letters and manuscripts not fully paid. In these cases the Department here enforces payment of the deficiency—which we either have to pay, or to decline receiving the letters or manuscripts. Authors will also bear in mind that the Department now requires letter postage on all manuscripts—therefore it is often cheaper, as it is always safer, to send large packages by express.

We cannot undertake to answer questions relating to the acceptance or rejection of manuscripts in this column.

W. H., (Kenosha, Wis.). Your letter came to hand, and the questions were duly answered. Our correspondents must always allow us time—they are not the only persons in the world, and we have a great deal to do. We do not care about republishing a poem so recently published in our columns. Miss Filer's contributions were always welcome, and we should be pleased to see more of them.

H., (Mount Aye, Iowa,) asks: "1st. Where can Coopor's novels be obtained, and at what price? 2d. Do you publish your serial stories in book form? 3d. What does it cost to go from New York to Liverpool? 4th. How near has any one been to the North Pole? 5th. What do you think of my writing?" 1st. There are various editions. They can be had, in one edition at $1.25 per volume, $10.00 per set. In a superior edition at $2.25 per volume, $72.00 per set. 2d. No. We are not book publishers. 3d. Cabin passage will cost from eighty to one hundred dollars in gold, according to accommodation. Passengers in the steerage are taken at thirty dollars currency. 4th. Within about five hundred miles. 5th. It needs improvement.

W. C. D., (Charleston, S. C.) says: "I have been a subscriber to the Post since 1845, and feel myself not a patron, but a beneficiary, when it brings me such gems as Dame Hall, On Silver Wings, Marah, Two New-Year's Days, The Cost of Conquest, and last, but not least, Ever My Queen. There is an exquisite charm in writing that reveals at once the talent of an authoress and the delicacy of a lady, as in Two New-Year's Days. That gem I have lost by lending. 1st. Is it procurable? Is the author known? 2d. Has Pierce Egan ever written anything else comparable to Ever My Queen? 3d. Is Mrs. Henry Wood's East Lynne to be had in book form?" 1st. We really do not remember this story. If we had the date of publication we might be able to answer. 2d. That is a matter of taste. We are glad to find you so well pleased with our efforts. 3d. Yes.

ANNA, (of Saratoga, N. Y.,) wishes to know "Whether there is such a word as Hurlothrumbo." Not in common use certainly. We believe there is a play, written about a hundred years ago, called "Hurlothrumbo; or, The Supernatural," by Samuel Johnson. And a poem of Hood's contains the following verse:

"Consider then, before, like Hurlothrumbo,
You aim your club at any creed on earth,
That, by the simple accident of birth,
You might have been high-priest to Mumbo-Jumbo."

That is all we know upon the subject, and if any of our readers know more, we should like to hear from them.

JOHN, (Philadelphia,) asks: "Who was Sarmatia? and where did he fall?" Sarmatia is the poetical name of Poland, and is used by Campbell in the "Pleasures of Hope," when describing the fall of that kingdom. He says:

"O, bloodiest picture in the book of time!
Sarmatia fell unwept, without a crime.
Found not a generous friend, a pitying foe,
Strength in her arms, nor mercy in her woe."

The word Sarmatia is derived from the Sarmatæ, a great Slavic tribe, who, in ancient times, dwelt between the Vistula and the Don. A number of years ago, the sad fate of Poland was on every tongue, and Thaddeus of Warsaw was the favorite book of the young ladies.

YOUNG MUSICIAN, (Reading, Penn.,) writes: "What is the true meaning of Tremolo in music?" It means the rapid repetition of tones without any apparent cessation, so as to produce a tremulous effect. The tremolo stop in the organ is the stop which produces this effect.

E. F. G., (Annapolis, Md.) writes: 1st. "Is there such a word as Schab? 2d. Do Schnapps mean any particular kind of liquor, or only a drink of any liquor? 3d. What kind of a photograph is a Stanotype?" 1st. It is the same word as Shab, only differently spelt. 2d. It means Holland Gin—but is often applied, we think, to a drink of any strong liquor. 3d. It is a photographic picture taken upon tin—a tin-type.

SPORTSMAN, (Pottsville, Pa.,) writes: "Are the catfish in the Schuylkill different from other catfish? A gentleman informs me to that effect, but I doubt it. Every man's geese are swans in his own eyes." We have seen it so stated. And in no other way can the fact that "catfish and coffee" have always been a favorite meal at the Falls of Schuylkill be accounted for. The Schuylkill catfish are said to be far superior to those of the Delaware, for instance.

LADY ARNOT, (Hillsboro, Tenn.,) asks: "Give me the American pronunciation of siesta, ennui, chaperon." She also is very highly complimentary of our stories, for which she will please accept our thanks. We are not able to make any promises concerning the authors mentioned. There is no telling what the future may bring forth. Also in relation to republishing the story mentioned we cannot answer just at present. There is no American pronunciation of the words given. They are all foreign terms, not yet fully adopted into our language, and should have their original pronunciation. The first word is Spanish, and pronounced se-es-tah. The other two French, pronounced shap-e-rone and ong-nwe.

FLEETWOOD, (Tenn.,) writes: "1st. Is it improper to introduce a young gentleman to a young lady in a ball room, without first asking the consent of the lady? 2d. Is the introduction of a young gentleman to a young lady in a ball-room a sufficient acquaintance to authorize him to approach her on any other occasion? 3d. Is Owen Meredith a fictitious name? If so, what is his real name? 4th. Was James Fisk, junior, married?" 1st. It is not safe to introduce a young gentleman without the consent of the lady, unless you are fully satisfied that he will prove a desirable and pleasant acquaintance. 2d. Not in all cases. The gentleman on meeting the lady afterward, should be governed by her demeanor, and not attempt to force on her an acquaintanceship which she may not desire to renew. 3d. His name is Edward Robert Bulwer. He is the only son of Bulwer, the novelist. 4th. Yes.

LIZZIE, (Cleburne, Texas), writes: "We, like every one else, will appeal to you to settle our quandary, knowing your decision to be reliable; for we—like the little boy was by his Sabbath-school teacher—think that if you say so, it must be so even if it ain't so. You have become such an important member of our household that even little Lou, our three-year-old pet, uses your name with the utmost familiarity. One day she repeated Old Mother Hubbard, at the dinner-table, in the following style:

'She went to the cobbler's to get him some shoes,
When she came back he was reading the Post.'

We were all much amused to find the Post and news were synonymous terms in her mind. By answering the following questions you will oblige the daughter of a twenty years' subscriber. 1st. What relationship was there between Daniel Webster and Noah Webster? 2d. Where are the Modocs, also what have they done to cause such a sensation in the papers at present? 3d. What is real lace?" 1st. There was no relationship between them. 2d. The Modocs are now in the hands of United States troops, in Oregon. They refused to go on the reservation provided for them, and established themselves in a natural stronghold, a wild district in Southern Oregon, called the Lava Beds. An attempt was made to treat with them, but they proved treacherous, killed two of the peace commissioners, General Canby and Doctor Thomas, and wounded others. Vigorous war was at once declared, and they were assaulted and followed in their flight until they were all slain or captured. 3d. Real lace is the genuine article, as distinguished from the counterfeit. It was formerly woven with thread, by hand, on a hard-stuffed cushion, covered with parchment, on which the pattern was drawn. This was a very slow and laborious process. Large quantities of lace are now made by the bobbin-net machine, which has caused a complete revolution in the manufacture of the fabric. It is said that the complex ingenuity of this machine surpasses any other human process of manufacture.

M. C., (Erie, Ind.,) writes: "Please answer through the correspondents' column the following questions: 1st. Do you re-mail copies of the Post that fail to reach subscribers? I have been a subscriber nearly three years, and have missed three. 2d. Is cutting the hair close or 'shingling' injurious? 3d. Ought a person with weak eyes to try to gain knowledge at the probable expense of injury to the eyesight? 4th. Can you give me the address in Philadelphia of a reliable coin collector? I mean one who buys rare and old coins. 5th. What per cent. is this writing from your standpoint?" 1st. We have forwarded the missing numbers, though we do not consider ourselves bound to do it. 2d. It is not injurious to the health, or to the hair. Some persons, however, think it very injurious to the appearance of the 'shingled' individual. 3d. He would run great risk of defeating his object and losing his eyesight at the same time. There is seldom anything gained by overworking any organ of the body. Nature is sure to revenge herself. Thus, if the eyes are strained by reading, they are rendered unfit for service for a period in which the extra reading might have been performed with safety. The eye is too delicate and important an instrument to be trifled with. 4th. John W. Kline, 218 South Eighth street. Also, Robert Davis, Sixteenth and Vine streets. 5th. It is no easy matter to class writing so closely as is necessary in giving its percentage of value. If all writing was similar in character, and differed only in degree of perfection, this might be done with some correctness. But it is impossible to fix the numerous varieties of writing to any fixed scale of values. You write a very fair hand.

MRS. E. H., (Monterey, O.,) asks: "Please inform me if the story called Religio Christi, printed many years ago in the Post, is issued in book form. If so what is its cost, and where can I get it?" It has not been published in book form.